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The Church in the Temporal Order: Her Social Mission

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The Church Is the Continued Incarnation of Christ

MANKIND is created for a supernatural end which is the possession of God through love. It is not a goal that it has chosen for itself or that it could reach by its own unaided efforts. Freely called by God, man can attain it with His help, with His grace. Now this supernatural vocation of humanity does not tear it from its natural existence. Baptism which puts in us the germ of divine life does not lift us out of this world. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, that a woman has taken and buried away in three measures of meal, enough to leaven the whole batch" (Matt. 13:33). In explaining the parable of the good seed and the tares Christ explains: "The field is the world, and the sons of the kingdom are the good seed; the sons of the wicked ones are the tares" (Matt. 13:38).

It is clear that the reality of the kingdom of God is a divine-human reality. By her origin the Church is divine and she is divine by her purpose which is the supernatural union of all men in Christ; she is divine in the means at her disposal, faith and the sacraments. But she is also human. She not only exists in the world, but she is engrafted on the world; her member-

ship is human; her mission extends to all mankind; she must incarnate every century, every nation, everything human worthy of assimilation. The great German theologian, Moehler, defines the Church as "the permanent incarnation of the Son of God." Our Lord was an enigma to His contemporaries. The Church, too, a human-divine mystery, continues to baffle the world — "a scandal to the Jews, folly to the Gentiles" (I Cor. 1:23); she must be "in the world and yet not of the world." Paul Blanshard sees in the Church merely a human society, a powerful political, hierarchically-dominated religious system foreign to the American ideal of freedom and democracy. Others bitterly complain that the Church has failed humanity by her inability to solve the many social, political, economic problems of our times. For them she stands aloof, unresponsive to the appeals of a confused humanity.

For the Middle Ages the Church seemed too much identified with the temporal order and now she seems too far removed from, too foreign to the market place to be able to be effective in fulfilling her God-given mission, which is to lead mankind to its supernatural goal, a mankind plagued by material needs, a world adrift among contrary social trends. It is business for business' sake, labor for labor's sake, art for art's sake, politics for its own sake, etc. It is anarchy in the spiritual order and sooner or later one of these elements, most often the strongest one, will try to create order by sheer necessity, generally by force. From self-interest, the inevitable progress has been to class interest, race interest, state interest.

What is the precise role which the Church must play in harmonizing the two orders, the temporal and the transcendental? The Church, today, must give the temporal world a principle of unity, must re-order society without, however, taking over the temporal order. That is the ever delicate work of the Incarnation.

Relation of the Religious to the Temporal Order

Two general principles will help us to determine the role of the Church in the temporal order. First, the Church is not directly interested in the temporal order; secondly, she is directly

interested in the supernatural vocation of each individual and of the human race.

First, the Church is not directly concerned with promoting industry or labor or economics or science, etc. She has a stake in economic, scientific or political movements only because of the individual, the subject of these movements, who has a supernatural destiny which it is her mission to promote. Therefore the Church will not intervene in man's legitimate conquest of the world, except to remind him that he cannot find complete happiness in this world, to remind him that he is not only an incomplete but a sinful being who needs prudence, self-discipline, Christian asceticism when throwing himself into worldly tasks. The Church reminds the individual man, subject at once of the natural and supernatural order, that his temporal pursuits, his diplomatic, industrial, domestic, athletic activities are free actions, therefore moral actions, therefore subject to God's law which cannot permit that man achieve his goal by means diametrically opposed to the divine plan.

Family life, economic enterprises, national and international relations — these are natural things, not directly under the Church's supervision, yet they have their repercussions in the religious sphere of the one who practises them. Sin destroys divine life in the soul and the Church will point out what is sinful in certain ways of family living, certain business practices or financial transactions, certain esthetic conceptions, etc. Consequently the Church forbids contraception, sterilization, divorce, abortion, mercy-killing, certain books and certain movies, prostitution of the mind and of the body. Natural truth as developed by science and philosophy is the proper function of the intellect and the Church, as such, has no special light on the subject; but the intellect can err, science and philosophy can overstep their competence and enter the religious field where the Church is at home, the domain of faith and morals. Or again, they can undermine the very foundations of the supernatural order by denying the existence of the soul or the historical existence of Christ. Then the Church must safeguard again the treasure committed to her care; she protects jealously the Christian truth and the Christian life.

If we cast a quick glance at the broader picture of society, there are social conditions which offer a favorable or an unfavorable atmosphere for the development of Christian life. Undoubtedly martyrdom is always a way out of the difficulty. For those who are perfect, all things turn into good. But for the great majority of us, for the everyday individual, certain favorable

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conditions for the practice of Christian life are necessary. This was the plea of Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* in favor of social legislation and of all the Popes after him who have clamored for social reform. A certain well-being is the normal condition for the practice of virtue and of religion; too great riches, as much as too great misery, are a grave danger. In the matter of authority, too much restriction or not enough discipline, whether in the state, the school or the family, may be grave obstacles to the flowering of the Christian life. In these matters the Church reminds us where the truth stands through its encyclicals and pastoral letters on political regimes, on education, on family behavior.

Magnificent Leadership

It is the good fortune of the world that the Church has shown the way so magnificently in the course of the last seventy-five years. Because the Church knows what man's end is she can indicate, with a directness which sometimes surprises, what his real condition is, how he is being ruined by sin, to tell him what are the favorable conditions that he should discover in the temporal order and to trace the principal features of it. This the encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI and the Christmas messages of Pius XII did with the social and political problems of the current half century.

Doing this, the Church does not prescribe the means to reach these goals, the economic institutions that should solve these problems or the social legislation that might ameliorate the lot of the people, or the political expedients necessary to promote the harmony of nations; she does not have special lights with respect to the means of a technical nature. It belongs to the Christians themselves, enlightened by the Church concerning man's final goal, to study, experiment under their own responsibility. It is their assignment to establish in detail a political, juridical, economically satisfying organization. Actual realizations may differ, because they depend on variable conditions and situations, e.g., political and economic, etc., but the goal should be the same: to establish favorable conditions for the development of Christian living. Without being guided step by step in all his acts by the authority of the Church, the Christian should always act as a Christian, in all his temporal action.

Church Molds the Christian

This leads us to the second principle: namely, the Church directly molds the Christian. The Church is interested in the human being directly.

Her mission is to make of him a son of God, to incorporate him into the great family of redeemed mankind, the Mystical Body of Christ. "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21); it operates a transformation in our souls and proportionately to the degree of our generosity and dedication, it affects all the actions of our life. "The seed falls on good ground and yields here, thirty, there sixty and yonder a hundred fold" (Matt. 13:8). The same human being lives humanly and supernaturally and if we can say so by the same means. Faith does not aim to further scientific truth which reason can secure for itself, but it is a kind of knowledge, it is an assent of the human intellect under the inspiration of grace; it is the same human will that loves God and proposes to itself human tasks. It is impossible to reach our supernatural destiny while leading a double life — a Christian life and a human life, as we might lead an official life and a private life, or like the life of the actor who impersonates on the stage and leads an entirely different life off stage. Our most intimate dispositions are authentic only if we translate them into action. The life that is in our hearts should inspire our whole life. We cannot tolerate in ourselves contradictory attitudes, a hypocritical conduct in the line of our activity, in the line of our profession.

Grace, the divine life which the Church communicates, is the possession of charity, i.e., the love of God and of neighbor. The life in heaven where the supernatural life unfolds completely will also be union of man with God and union of men among themselves. We should, therefore, decide as a rule of our activity in all spheres to make of earth an image as much as possible resembling the life of heaven. This, not only in our individual and intimately private life, but also in our public life. It is a Christian duty that in all its social, economic and political structures our world be organized in such a way that it offers as perfect as possible a reflection of the Christian ideal, considering, of course, the circumstances. In other words, the law of charity should dominate the very life of this world.

Justice and Charity Necessary

This remark must not be taken in a Utopian sense. It is impossible that the world be without its injustices, its conflicts and acts of violence. The fallen nature of man will always plague humanity on earth. What the Christian must aim to do is to see to it that human relations and the institutions that regulate them express the greatest possible charity, and when disciplinary measures have to be used, that they are used

from a motive of charity. As long as there is violence and injustice (and that is till the end of time) charity will demand that use be made of force and constraint in order not to let injustice establish itself supreme, but the use of force must be inspired and regulated by charity; the good of the individual and the common good must be the motive. Again charity may not disdain justice. "Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts after justice" (Matt. 5:6). Instead of resigning himself to a given situation — the racial problem, the social problem, the cold war, etc. — the Christian will always try to introduce more charity in the world with the view of setting up an order where charity is expressing itself more and more. He does not know how well he will succeed, but he must work in that direction.

This ideal Our Lord ardently wished for His apostles, in the words "*Ut unum sint*. . . . That they may be one" (John 17:21). It is not merely a question of establishing union at certain moments and under certain circumstances, let us say at Mass, but in all of life, and in all our institutions, in all our organizations; the Christian ideal of community (so long neglected by an individualistic society) must be re-discovered. Man needs the natural communities, the family, the free associations, the state for his natural life; the supernatural life is engendered and fostered in the supernatural community. The natural community, or the sharing on a human level, is the condition for sharing the supernatural life. A genuine human society is the indispensable condition for the flowering of the Mystical Body.

All temporal activity must therefore be leavened with Christian charity. This is the incarnation. Christianity does not merely forbid certain acts and command certain others — religious practices, for instance. It wants to orientate all of life. "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all for the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31); such will be the triumph of charity. A Christian has not accomplished all his duty as a Christian when he has observed the ten commandments or even the commandments of the Church. He must work, in the measure of his lights and his strength, to discover and to put in practice the means to achieve, even on the temporal order, the ideal of charity and of community which he represents as a member of the Church.

The World in Crisis of Unity

It is quite obvious that the world has not achieved this Christian ideal of unity or uni-

versal charity. The work of the Incarnation is far from being completed. The world, in the words of the late Cardinal Suhard of Paris, is undergoing a crisis of unity.

The stages by which it has come about are well known: the great discoveries of science engendered movement and speed; space has changed its dimensions; the airplane has welded continents and linked up the Antipodes. Communications have multiplied. Everything — production, consumption, distribution, economics and finance — all is done now on an international scale. The humblest object of daily life comes from the ends of the earth. Each of us depends on the rest of mankind for the bare fact of survival. And it is the same in the spheres of feeling and thought. The Press is everywhere, and with it the film; for the cinema everywhere reproduces the same cosmopolitan features upon the screen. And the ether, which knows no frontiers, takes the music, the news and the thought of all to all indiscriminately. Radio and television are the brain and the nerve force which, for the first time in its history, have made the pulses of our planet beat with the same rhythm at the same moment in time.¹

The world is going through a new birth, a world humanism is in the process of being created.

The modern man who is coming into existence seems in truth to proceed from an organic unity and an inner principle of life; and it is the same with the City he is preparing for his use. The most obvious feature of that new humanism is its technical character. Born of scientific discovery and the machine, to them it owes the style it has everywhere assumed, it is based on them, it relies on them to bring the coming order into being. The scientific outlook is daily ousting classical culture and taking its place. The object of thought has changed; the world of pure ideas has been abandoned for efficient action. . . .²

Also another aspect of the new age is that it is communal, universal. Not the individual, but the team is the basis of its organization. It is the age of corporations, labor unions, United Nations, etc. The question that the Cardinal asks of the Christian is "Can the Christian afford to absent himself from this new birth?" Who will unite the world?

We are not any more in the Middle Ages. The Church as such is not in a position to guide this work through the representatives of religion as in the ages of faith. The job, today, belongs to the layman. Therefore the Church pins its hopes on a vigorous laity. This is the era of the layman in the world and therefore in the Church. We belong, so we are reminded every day, to the century of the common man. What in former times belonged exclusively to the elite or to the gentleman, today is everybody's birthright. Education, for example, which until recently was the privilege of a class, is coming to be within everybody's reach. This holds true not only for grade and high school but since the GI bill of rights for college as well. The trend toward universal adult education is steadily progressing.

Governments, today, are controlled by representatives of the masses, those masses which for so long were ruled by tyrant, despot or aristocrat. This is certainly true of democratic countries. But even in totalitarian countries, the rulers call themselves popular governments, or governments ruling by mandate from the masses and for the masses. We live in a world which has seen unprecedented developments in science, medicine, industry, transportation. Again, this is a genuinely human development. It has increased man's control of nature, it has brought the human race physically closer together; but spiritually man is worlds apart.

In today's world the layman occupies the strategic position. He is in control of all those social, economic, political institutions which determine to a great extent the lives of men. And the Church which grows and moves with the world, which needs to give men divine life and abundantly, is also shifting its emphasis to the layman. Leo XIII began this trend by urging Catholics to participate fully in the new economic and political institutions of the times. It was the age of Catholic labor unions, Catholic political parties, Catholic social institutions of all kinds. Pope St. Pius X, with a keen supernatural insight, saw that these social efforts needed a supernatural vitality and therefore made the Church's supernatural means widely available. He encouraged frequent and early Holy Communion, fuller participation in the official worship of the Church, he advocated the formation of small groups of men to organize the apostolate within the existing structure of the Church, he was the first to use the term "Catholic Action" as a movement with emphasis on the lay participation in the Church's work and worship. "The scandal of the twentieth century," Pope Pius XI said, "was the loss of the working masses to the Church," and he labored during his whole pontificate to inspire social action and to institutionalize the lay apostolate.

And to complete the picture, let us mention the fact that the gloriously reigning Pope, the twelfth Pius, is continuing to urge the laity to answer the call to Catholic Action. He sent special appeals to women urging them to fulfill their political functions. At his bidding the first international congress of the lay apostolate was held in Rome in the Fall of 1951.

Power of Secularism

We must admit quite frankly, however, that despite prestige of Pope and clergy, despite the millions of the faithful who with more or less

fervor live Catholic doctrine and the sacramental life, Catholicism does not lead the world. We are living in a secularistic world. The industrial revolution took place outside the influence of Christian inspiration. The conquest and the taming of nature by the technical revolution, the growth and power of the masses, the ideas which inspire them, all of these powerful movements of the modern day which are largely shaping the lives of men and of society are developing apart from and outside of the body of Christian thought. This is the great tragedy of the modern day.

The bishops of the United States have deplored this universal secularism in several joint letters as the heresy of our times. God is systematically excluded from the halls and chambers of national and international legislative bodies; the legal systems are setting up laws based on independent morality; business organizes for business' sake as art was and is for art's sake. Industry is organized for the profit of a few or for the exercise of power in the hands of a few. Public education is avowedly God-less. Secularism is the very air we breathe so that even among Catholics it is unconsciously accepted. Not that God is excluded from our life, but He occupies a very restricted corner indeed. Catholics are faithful to their Sunday obligations and pay lip service to the Gospel teaching, but how much influence does the Gospel morality have upon their daily workaday lives? Environment and accepted patterns set the moral standards. These standards guide not only their professional life, but their more intimate family and private lives as well. This is the tragedy of the day, not only that some men are godless, but that our own society is not safe for Christian living.

The late Popes have put their hopes in the lay apostolate as the basic remedy of the times. They are asking for a militant laity to set the world back on its feet, to restore the Christian order in society, to make the world safe for Christian living. The job of the lay apostolate is none other than to incarnate, i.e., make Christ take flesh, in the whole of our present day, material, scientific and technical industrial civilization. This civilization needs to be humanized and Christianized, made a tool for man's salvation, instead of for his destruction.

A Conscious and Dedicated Laity

Raising up a laity that is conscious of its mission and that is willing to spend itself for the salvation of the human race is the glorious task of the present Church and particularly of the

educational institutions of our land. Lay apostles are not born, they are formed. Christ spent the better part of His career training a group of apostles to continue His work. A similar task is incumbent upon us except that the world seems much less receptive to the Christian leaven than in Christ's time.

As Rev. Walter Farrell, O.P., wrote in the *Thomist* of April 1947:

As the eyes of the twentieth century apostle scan these horizons he cannot but find them more humanly hopeless than were the horizons that stretched before the eager, always impatient eyes of Peter. The twentieth century apostle has a road which is much longer than the length of all the roads to Rome, he has much farther to go, because within his time men have gone much farther afield and now it is such an intolerable distance from man to man.³

The task of the twentieth century lay apostle is to set up a social order that is conducive to Christian living. It demands of the lay apostle a task similar to that of John the Baptist, leveling hills and filling valleys for the coming of Christ. Social obstacles, such as class barriers, race barriers, selfishness of all kinds, must be eliminated from family life, economic life, international life. Valleys of ignorance, of hatred, prejudice, lacks and ills of all kinds, must be filled in with the basic recognition of human rights and human dignity.

Action in the Market Place

In training for the lay apostolate, we must not train little priests, or miniature religious. The Church may need helpers in the clerical and parochial apostolates, but that is not what the Church calls the vital need of the LAY APOSTOLATE. Pope Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno*, called for workers to be apostles of workers, employers to be apostles of employers.⁴ It is not a Catholic Action of the sacristy that is called for, but a Catholic Action of the market place. And we must not think that the task of the layman is blueprinted by the hierarchy. It is all to be worked out and discovered, pioneered. The Church will respect the autonomy of the scientist, of the political analyst, of the economic or social philosopher, of the civic planner, of the psychiatrist. These areas enjoy a genuine autonomy and the Church will not disturb their intellectual labor unless the application of their research becomes a danger to society when they lead to a misconception of man's nature or destiny. She must call attention to error wherever it exists whether it be in Communism or laissez-faire Liberalism, in family legislation when it countenances divorce or artificial insemination, in warfare on the subject of the use of the H-

bomb, in social legislation when it denies man's basic human rights. In all these matters the Church raises her voice of warning or condemnation because she is responsible for saving the men and women of every generation whose salvation is achieved not in some abstract sort of way, but through their daily actions and daily exercise of their rights and duties as human beings, citizens, neighbors, professionals or workers. Pope Pius XII emphasized this autonomy in his Christmas message of 1942:

The Church does not wish to take sides against one or the other concrete forms peculiar to different peoples and states, which try to resolve the gigantic problems of national as well as world collaboration as long as these solutions respect the divine law.⁵

What the Church needs in the person of her laity is a keen awareness of social realities and social needs. The area in which Christian initiative is especially needed today is in the field of social, political and economic research. Some accuse the Church of being backward or overly conservative in social action. The initiative in these matters belongs clearly not to the hierarchy, but to the scholar and social philosopher. It is the specialist's function to give concrete answers or solutions to social problems that afflict the world. The Church in the person of pope or bishop may discern their value, accept them, control them or reject them. But solutions must be worked out in the concrete. The world is waiting for them. The Catholic with his grasp of man's nature and destiny is in a position most suited to offer a fulfillment to the aspirations of the human race. This is often done by supporting solutions which have been worked out independently.

For example, the gains achieved by labor through Guaranteed Wage contracts agreed to by Ford and General Motors in 1955 were considered in Europe as a tremendous social victory not only for labor, but for free enterprise as well. What labor had not achieved in socialist countries through political means, has been achieved through the more normal procedure of mutual agreement and understanding. It is easy enough to condemn Communism, for its fruits are apparent. To offer alternatives is the proper responsibility of the lay apostle, be he social philosopher or economist.

Challenge to Build Together

In conclusion, therefore, it is the proper function of the Church's hierarchy to keep intact the deposit of faith. It is the responsibility of the faithful to make the faith come alive in the

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Objectives of Catholic Social Action

Reverend John M. Hayes

TOWARD the end of his autobiography, Monsignor John Ryan sought to explain the motives which had led him to a lifelong pursuit of what he chose to call social justice. "The material, intellectual and other goods," he wrote, "which the Christian reformer strives to bring within the reach of the masses, are necessary to enable them to develop personality and pursue perfection as adopted children of God. Thus, the object and justification of social reform are lifted to the highest conceivable plane, and they provide the loftiest motives for the practice of social charity and social justice."¹

With this expression of some of the high aims which sustain us, we proceed to investigate where the social action movement in the United States, or at least our part in it, is going. For my part, I hesitate to make even tentative suggestions without some consideration of where the social action movement has been.

Defining social action is scarcely easier than determining the limits of jurisdiction of the Teamsters' Union. It might be equated with the practice of social justice—i.e., any activity undertaken deliberately in view of the common good—and encouragement of such practice. Historically most of us have held a narrower conception of social action. Both by the title and content of his book, *A Better Economic Order*, Msgr. Ryan indicated his own emphasis, which was, of course, very influential. Social action proposed to reform industrial relations and the conduct of industry in general, with agriculture as a frequent addendum. The organizations and activities contemplated by this conference reveal a much broader concept of social action.

There were hardly a dozen notable Catholic "social actionists" in this country prior to 1930. Since then hundreds of priests and laymen have participated in the movement, stimulated principally by the depression and the social encyclicals. Parenthetically, the end of the depression and the absence of new encyclical teaching of the

scope of *Quadragesimo Anno* account in large part for the recent slump in interest. We have had other guides and incentives in these twenty-five years. Yet we have leaned heavily for our justification and norms upon the statements of the popes, chiefly Leo and Pius XI. I think it is generally true that the priests of the Social Action Department and the Institute of Social Order and similar diocesan departments, the so-called labor priests or social actionists (priests and laymen), the sociologists and economists and journalists who have helped, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, the Catholic Labor Alliance, the Young Christian Workers and certain unionists, occasionally an *ad hoc* volunteer, saw themselves as bridging the gap between the popes and everyday affairs.

To simplify, no doubt to oversimplify, the popes were moved to speak at length on economic life by the incidence therein of sin, heresy and suffering. The sins were various, mostly against justice; almost equally deplorable were the occasions of sin. The heresies were Marxism and unmitigated capitalism. The suffering was widespread poverty, oppression, unemployment, and assorted misery.

It may be, as Fanfani insists, that there is an ineradicable conflict of principle between Catholicism and capitalism. This is certainly true of Catholicism and Communism. But the Church is only secondarily interested in philosophy; her primary interest is people. Leo discovered numerous evils which were egregious, widespread and unrecognized, and which were affecting throngs of people disastrously. I think this should be remembered. Of course it was necessary to restate and remind men of the proper goals of life and business—you can't have morality, you can't have order, without right ends. They had to be told about justice and charity as a practical matter, because these necessary spiritual implements of right order were being generally neglected. They had to be told of the social means through which justice and charity might be exercised to the attainment of a decent living for all: namely government, voluntary organization of each economic group, and ultimately organized collaboration of all groups.

FATHER HAYES, of the Catholic Labor Alliance in Chicago and editor of *Apostolate*, delivered this address at the Second Annual Catholic Social Action Conference in New Orleans, this Fall.

It is superfluous to review for you the content of the encyclicals. What I mean to recall is that the social encyclicals were in the main a response to dire human need, and only secondarily an answer to speculative questions. "What is wrong," they asked, "that affects people — and what are the effective correctives?" The implication is that we emphasize the same approach to social action today, which by no means excludes the need of sociological and economic scholarship.

What Did the Popes Accomplish?

The writings of Leo and Pius evince holy confidence that their teaching would effect reform. Yet, whatever the anticipated results, they were duty-bound to proclaim much-needed truths, protest against injustice and compassionate its victims. Whatever else, they could manifest the charity, wisdom, prudence and courage of Christ and His Church.

What impact have the papal social teachings had? Opinions vary. The *Catholic Advocate* of Melbourne makes an optimistic estimate. Leo's encyclical, it says, brought about

a movement of social study . . . by clerics and laity, in which the unchanging principles of Catholic social ethics were applied to the new human situation. This bore fruit, in its turn, in the gradual emergence of the great Christian-democratic movements of our own age, whose bold and practical spirit of reform enabled them to take a leading part in European life. . . . The social science of the Church has not remained an academic thing hidden in obscurity; it has been brought into the full noonday of public life; and the doctrines which Leo set forth have penetrated not only throughout the Catholic world, but among those outside it, becoming "part of the intellectual heritage of the whole human race," as the late Pope Pius XI truly declared.

On the other hand, in the same month our own *Sign* editorialized:

The teachings of Marx have been adopted as the Communist bible; they have been studied, analyzed and applied; they have been spread over the earth, with a fanatical and violent zeal.

The teachings of Leo and Pius have had a mixed reception. They are little known outside the Church. An elite few among Catholics have received them with enthusiasm and have tried to apply their principles to the solution of the problems of our modern industrial society. Some Catholics have opposed them as the unauthoritative pronouncements of ecclesiastics who know little about the economic laws that rule our industrial world. The average Catholic, if he has heard of them at all, has only the faintest idea of what they are about.

These somewhat diverse views are given space impartially and in juxtaposition by *The Catholic Mind* in its encyclical anniversary issue of 1951. The truth may lie somewhere between them, but who can discover it with any accuracy?

Social Action Movement in the United States

Outside of the Central Verein, there was nothing resembling a social action movement in the United States before 1900. Then came Msgr. Ryan's *The Living Wage* and Father Peter Dietz's heroic attempt at labor education, which lasted a few years. The convention of the Federated Catholic Societies had a go at social justice shortly after 1900. The next milestone was the Bishops' Program of 1919, prepared by Msgr. Ryan.

As was already said, hundreds of priests got into the act after 1930. It was simple. People would listen to elementary statements. We protested unemployment and low wages, supported new unions and the right to organize, encouraged strikers; a few walked picket lines. Some spoke and wrote in support of the new legislation — minimum wage laws, relief programs, public housing, and social security with its various features. Warnings and counter-moves against Communists in unions were timely. Some defended the bankrupt farmers. There were demands to curb profits and the concentration of wealth. Evening schools of all sorts were established to train men for union activity or at least to tell miscellaneous Catholics about Papal teaching and the facts of life. Four or five newspapers of the *Labor Leader* type were started.

In the late thirties there were ample references to the "vocational order" or "occupational group system" or even the "corporative order." It had a good play at the two national congresses of social action, at the priests' summer schools and at the Industrial Conferences. Things were so bad up to the outbreak of the second World War that it was easily arguable that we needed a new "system" or "order." On the other hand, there was so much to be done immediately, so much "patching," that little was done to reduce to concrete terms what was felt to be a rather remote ideal. During the war the term "Industry Council" came into vogue in the CIO and was widely adopted. Finally, after the war, a sharp impetus to discussion of the proposed "system" was provided by Brother Gerald Schnepf and his Committee on the Industry Council Plan. A spate of optimistic proposals drew out a number of skeptical rejoinders. One result was a modification of terms: "Industry Council Idea" became the more acceptable phrase.

Twenty-five Years in Review

In the past twenty-five years we have attempted to promote social justice persistently, or

sporadically or momentarily, in the following ways:

1. Labor-management-clergy conferences.
2. Arbitration and mediation of disputes.
3. Priests' schools.
4. Labor schools.
5. White-collar night schools.
6. Specialized publications like *Social Order and Work*.
7. Magazine and newspaper articles, columns, and editorials.
8. Seminary, college and high school courses.
9. Books, textbooks.
10. Doctoral dissertations.
11. Study and discussion clubs.
12. Occasional sermons.
13. Lectures to all sorts of audiences, including nuns.
14. Talks to unions.
15. Appeals to legislatures.
16. Joint clergy statements.
17. Continuing organizations like Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, Catholic Labor Alliance, Young Christian Workers, and Catholic Interracial Councils.
18. The Catholic Rural Life Conference, conventions, publications, columns.
19. Talks and discussions for specialized Catholic Action groups like CFM.
20. The consequent but scattered day-to-day efforts of a number of Catholics in all walks of life (in government, unions, management, professions) who know something now of Catholic social teaching and try, more or less, to apply it in their jobs.

These activities and probably a few more go to make up the Catholic social action movement as we have known it. The list is long enough, but many of these activities have been hit-and-run, and not a few of them have long since run.

What Has Been Accomplished?

A. One over-all result of all this motion, one of which we can be reasonably certain, is an enhancement of the reputation of the Church among millions of Americans, Catholic and non-Catholic. This does not mean overwhelming admiration. It means that very many associate the Church with the defense of right and justice, with concern for the poor and weak; perhaps with an awareness and competence as regards modern social problems. At the very least it is difficult now to hurl at us the blanket charge of indifference or hostility to the rights and needs of workers and of the poor.

B. We can point to a few leaders or sub-leaders in the fields of labor, government, educa-

tion, journalism, fewer in business and law, who owe their attitudes and ideas in part to the Catholic social action movement.

C. I think we can fairly claim some influence on the labor movement and some credit for the gains it has made and the generally moderate course it has followed. Here a few priests and a few laymen were important; but it is hard to say where such influence begins and where it ends and what it amounts to. Taken all together, it is not negligible.

D. As for the education of the Catholic public in our social principles and their practical implications, we cannot make large claims. Our people are not as ignorant as they were thirty years ago. Most of them know, e.g., that unions are not entirely reprehensible and that the Church does not endorse racial discrimination. Few would know about the duties of ownership or the criteria for fixing a just wage.

E. Some elements of the encyclical teaching and our interpretations have seeped through to non-Catholic specialists — lawmakers, union leaders, sociologists — perhaps a few vague notions to the general public.

F. I think we have had some slight influence on social legislation, through spokesmen in Washington and elsewhere, lay and clerical; through our press and official statements; possibly through Catholic Congressmen.

G. I doubt that we can claim major credit for the somewhat improved attitude over the country toward social legislation, labor unions, collective bargaining and strikes, labor-management cooperation, and toward the Negro.

H. We have hardly succeeded in getting any attention for the Industry Council Idea as such, outside of our own small circle of devotees and specialists. On the other hand, there has been some growth in the spirit of collaboration between management and labor and possibly Catholic exhortations have helped in that direction.

Twenty Years of Change

Almost since the beginning of the Great War in Europe employment in the United States has been at a high level. The widespread and severe hardships of the big depression have been so mitigated that few remember them. There are sizeable pockets of poverty, but few realize it. Communism in the unions and as an imminent domestic danger has been minimized. If our capitalism conformed to the description of Pius XI in 1931, it does so no longer without important qualifications. Federal legislation, the unions, enlightened self-interest and outcrop-

pings of social responsibility have made striking alterations in its operations and in its spirit. In other words, the heresies have been refuted or watered down; the suffering has been much reduced. What about the sins? The more obvious sins of injustice — exploitation, oppression, cruelty, cut-throat competition — have been curbed except in reduced areas. The criminal negligence of government has been corrected, at least at the federal level, in many important respects.

What's Wrong Today?

When we speak of sin and suffering today, conscience brings to mind at once the situation of our fifteen million Negroes and three or four million Spanish-speaking. A fraction of the Negroes are well-to-do, of course, as are a proportion of those of Mexican descent. The bulk of them suffer in body and soul, in employment, housing, education and the matter of civic rights, from discrimination and the disabilities born of discrimination and poverty. We have to think of the Puerto Ricans, perhaps 700,000 of them, when we think of suffering in the United States. We have to think of migrant workers and their varying fortunes, generally at low ebb. We have to think most of all of the Negro population. Negroes need help if the bulk of them are going to climb up to the accepted American standard of living. More, they need acceptance on the way up and after they have arrived. We have to think too of the millions of white workers whose wages still fall far short of a living wage. There is enough suffering even now, if we take a good look at it, in our own country with its vast potential, to convict us of shameful failure.

However, we must look farther. We must take a good look at the suffering of the miserable masses in Asia, Africa and Latin America, not to speak of parts of Europe. Since it is possible, over the long run, for these people, with the help of the prosperous and with self-help, to reach a decent standard of living, we can no longer shrug off our responsibility for them. Pius XI included them in his anxiety, Pius XII has done so much more frequently. We have to get world suffering on our minds and on the minds of our people and of Americans generally. Of course there are tremendous economic and political problems involved, but we must do what *we* can to make our people see the problem as one of human suffering crying for solution. We can continue to preach foreign assistance as an antidote to Communism; but for what it is worth we must try to get foreign assistance into

our people's heads as a demand of justice and Christian charity to half-starved brothers.

Where Is Unselfishness?

When we go scouting for *sins* in economic life today, we find places, in the South — and in the big cities of the North too — where the old favorite kinds of exploitation flourish. The country over we may have to look a little harder. I wonder if the incidence of selfishness and greed has so greatly diminished? Perhaps it has, but the desire for more things, comforts, toys, gadgets, luxuries is exceeding strong. It seems to me that there is almost as great a dearth of social justice in the average man as there was a generation ago. Who is willing to make sacrifices for the common good? Who thinks of it? He is a rather unusual individual.

Capitalism has not recanted all its heresies. Wealth and power are still pretty avidly endorsed as the ends of life, though there is some tendency to share them — mostly in the interest of better markets and more production, therefore more wealth and power. Capitalism may be half-converted, yet it retains some of the aspects of a false religion. It has hardly embraced the common good as an over-riding consideration. It has no apparent notion of accepting the overlordship of God and the primacy of the human spirit. If its first principles are false, can it be sound and can it endure? Whatever the answer and as a practical matter, while it works we can live with it.

Will it continue to work? When we advocate the Industry Council Idea, or the "organized industries and professions" — to use an older phrase — we assume that it will not work, or will not work consistently, or will not work up to its full potential. We may also assume that our present prosperity finds its margin in war spending and involves an inexorable tendency toward domination of the economy by the central government. Catholic experts who remain cool toward the Industry Council proposals may be reasonably satisfied with the existing structure; they may point out that no change in structure will be profitable or perhaps even possible without a profound change in spirit. Protagonists of the idea are ready to agree to this; they are likely to hold that we have the beginnings of a new spirit and the beginnings of a new structure; that they grow together; that we learn by doing, gradually but not too gradually; that we advance without insistence on fixed patterns but only adumbrations of the finished structure, which will never be finished anyway;

that it will, however, be substantially different and exercise all the necessary functions of a just and efficient economic order; that the Idea is sound and has no permanent satisfactory substitute.

Maintain a Long-range View

I am no expert. I hardly qualify as a social actionist. Be that as it may, I do not see the realization of the Industry Council Idea as the most pressing and immediate objective of the social action movement. It seems obvious that, while things are going well for most people, it will be very difficult to draw public attention and support to the idea or plan, not to speak of putting it into general effect. It takes trouble, and personal trouble, to interest most people in social reform. Nevertheless, the degree to which any society achieves over the years good work and a good living for all its citizens must be proportionate to its desire for just those things—and to its success in building an economic structure adapted to its desire. In other words, people generally must accept social justice as an obligation, if not a delight, and must so organize their economic arrangements as to be able to practice it.

Hence this recommendation: while working in dozens of ways, let us hope, toward more immediate objectives or toward public appreciation of more immediate causes, we should not lose sight of the fundamental, long-run objective, a thoroughly ethical economic order; however we name it, that's what it is, using "ethics" in its full traditional sense. And it would seem conformable to one of Pius XI's exhortations that all who can should join forces with Brother Schnepf in the semi-permanent task of developing the theory and practice of the Idea. He seems amenable to all shades of opinion. He seems responsible for most of the forward progress of this task in the past ten years; in fact he seems to have done most of the work himself.

What Needs Doing?

I have just indicated one continuing task to which as many as possible should give their co-operation, which all should support at least morally, which none should forget in their thinking, speaking and writing.

As for the rest, it is assumed that whatever is now moving in the social action movement—little efforts or larger ones—should continue. In view of lagging interest and activities and the strong tendency toward complacency, I would encourage any effort at all in the general direc-

tion of social justice. Life is so complex, human talent and inclination and receptivity are so diverse, that a variety—if we can get it—of approaches and methods is surely justified. It takes thousands of notes to make a symphony; if we can't have a symphony, let's develop enough cacaphony to avoid oblivion.

We can always promote the good name of the Church, her reputation for justice and charity; never mind the demurrers. We cannot envision a Catholic bloc swinging the country, or even the unions, in behind our program or some part of it. If we help to effect social reform, piecemeal or *in toto*, by way of law, the unions or management, it will come only remotely through our public propaganda. It will come rather through the action of individual Catholics or small groups of Catholics who have been motivated and instructed in the ways of social justice and who have risen to positions of influence by their hard work and persuasiveness. There is no sure-fire way to manufacture such individuals. Sometimes they turn up almost in spite of us. The papal instruction is to seek them out diligently, train them, and propel them into their apostolate. Here and there, haltingly, we follow the papal instruction.

If we could harness the Catholic educational system to our purpose, we would have better material to draw upon, and at the same time we would develop a broad base of support for social justice at union meetings and at the polling places. Perhaps our social action movement should try harder to enlist our schools in the task of developing a large body of Catholics with a general understanding of and *interest in* social problems. With the grace of God it should then be possible to produce a number of genuine social leaders. We have been faced, often enough, with the task of remodeling the products of our schools. Over the years ahead this problem invites our attention. Perhaps Father Cronin, with his high school textbook, is employing a likely tactic. If we could persuade our teachers in the next half century to stress social justice and charity as successfully as they pound in the obligation of Sunday Mass, we would have the base of a strong social action movement in this country and the likelihood of many devoted leaders.

By all means let us carry on all methods of education and formation so far devised. Let us revive projects that have died and experiment with new ways. People are too comfortable and complacent to give ready attention. It is hard to dramatize spiritual failures, such as the de-

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A Letter About Leadership

Vincent J. Giese

DEAR TOM:

Do you recall the discussion we had the other evening at Rossi's about methods of leadership training? We were defending the small group, intensive formation program over the broad membership type of youth organization as an effective tool for developing leaders.

It all started when Harry posed some objections to small groups. He suggested that our influence would be more widespread if we had, say, fifty people participating in a discussion of a social question, for example, instead of ten people. It was Harry's point that fifty people would have had at least a brushing acquaintance with some important idea. Perhaps they would never have had such an opportunity if they were not permitted to join in.

I believe Mario posed the objection that fifty people can't possibly participate in a discussion. Harry felt this quite unimportant. Even if only ten people carry the discussion, the remaining forty will benefit from having listened in. Thus everybody gains, not just ten people. Harry's point was underlined again that a large number of people have thus been influenced, not just a small, elite group.

I don't recall how long we carried on this discussion, but I have given the matter considerable thought since then. It seems to me that we have to make some clear distinctions, at the very beginning, between the nature and function of small groups and large membership organizations. Both have their legitimate ends; in a sense they complement each other. But we must never confuse the two. I don't even believe we can argue that one is sufficient to itself in training leaders.

Let us analyze the small group, first of all, as to its advantages and limitations. It is our contention that the small group is uniquely geared to training leaders. In view of its very smallness, members can be treated in an intimate way as persons. Within the framework of the small group, each person can make his

own unique contribution to a discussion. There is time for this, and moreover, the very stability and strength of the small group depend on the full participation of each of the members.

Of course, we know from experience that a small group discussion will not train leaders. Minds might be sharpened, but unless the discussion leads to action — unless the members themselves begin to accept small responsibilities and carry them out — there will be no training of the will. Leadership is necessarily attached to the will. We might call it a carrying out into action of our convictions in an influential way. We might at this point, for sake of clarity, extend our idea of *action* to *social action*. It is through social action that we influence others. This is the heart of leadership. A leader is one who influences others.

Actions for the sake of self-improvement, actions geared to self-discipline are indeed actions and are attached to the will, but they are not strictly associated with leadership. The object of such actions is *Self* rather than *Others*, whereas leadership always implies a relationship to *Others*. Not that self-discipline is an unworthy objective of small group work or even of leadership training programs, for certainly a fully trained leader is a perfectly forged — perfectly hardened — social instrument. He has moral character and moral strength. He is perfectly tuned, ever ready to enter relationships with others and ever able to withstand the rigors of leadership. To become such an instrument, he must practice self-discipline. Action so directed, then, is part and parcel of a leadership training program, but not its essence. We might note here that such opportunities are provided for in the Gospel inquiries of our small group meetings, where the actions decided upon often are personal actions aimed at a purification of the members.

Social actions, let us repeat, are the backbone of any leadership training program. Any small group approach which does not build social actions into its program is incapable of training leaders. It will stop short at the study club level, which in itself is well and good, but has nothing to do with leadership training.

MR. GIESE is the author of *Patterns for Teen-agers*, just released by Fides Publishers, in which he discusses some of his other work with youth groups.

This is a very important fundamental to grasp. It is the reason why we stress the social inquiry in specialized Catholic Action. It is as important as the Canon is to the Mass, because it is the action of the meeting, just as the Canon is the action of the Mass. Everything else prepares for this action.

What do we mean by social actions? We mean any carrying out of responsibilities, no matter how small, to others. Through our social inquiry we not only become aware of responsibilities, but we perform them. It is through the exercise of responsibilities rather than through an awareness of them that we exert leadership. This may sound like an over-simplified definition of leadership, but let us look at it.

What exactly happens to a young fellow or young girl when he carries out a responsibility? By accepting the responsibility he accepts a social fact that a certain situation can be improved. He accepts the fact, for example, that the union in his plant is weak. But more than this, he is willing to take the initiative in improving the situation rather than wait for some sort of natural law of adjustment to correct the situation in good time. He is willing, for example, to attend a union meeting, circulate a petition, become a steward. In carrying out the responsibility, he seizes the initiative. This seizing of the initiative rather than waiting passively is the first mark of leadership.

We begin now to see the tremendous value of even the smallest social action. In a sense, it releases a man from enslavement to the narrow confines of his own ego. It opens him up to others. This is what we mean by the very word Apostle. In Christian language, the words Apostle and Leader are interchangeable. The perfectly trained Apostle can say in time with St. Paul, "I act, now not I, but Christ acts within me." Christ remains the perfect Christian leader.

Our entire leadership program, then, should approximate our lives with Christ's life. In Christ the Ego was completely conquered and placed at the disposal of others. Might we be so bold to speculate that the leadership training program in Christ's life began at the age of twelve when He was found in the Temple doing His Father's business? Might we speculate that this was perhaps His first social action, His first execution of a social responsibility, His first step in a training program that was to reach its completion on the Cross when He carried out the supreme social action of dying

for the human race? I like to look at His life in this way.

Small Group Favors Free Actions

The framework of the small group makes it possible for us to take our first steps towards leadership. The smallness of the group guarantees the freedom of the actions. A free act is one taken with full consent of the will after a full investigation of the reasons for the action. Such a full investigation can take place in a small group, where each has a chance to contribute, to receive from the others, to resolve his personal doubts or problems, to gain the intellectual conviction so essential to the consent of the will. Mass psychology, propaganda, authoritarian rulings from above, politicking—all these are reduced to a minimum in a small group atmosphere in which each is treated with respect and where the opinion and experiences of each are given weight by all in a group effort to arrive at the most propitious solution required by the situation under discussion.

Not that small groups by the very reason of their existence guarantee free social actions. If so, we would not be concerned with specialized aspects of small group effectiveness, such as how to lead a discussion, how to run a meeting, how to obtain full participation, how to cope with differing personalities, how to utilize special talents, and all the other techniques.

A small group brings together different types of personalities, each of whom has a special contribution to make because of his unique background and unique personal history. Adroit leadership welds all this into a unified team, the members of which are tolerant of one another and cognizant of each other's special gifts. This is one of the great joys of leading a small group—this welding together of an odd assortment of individuals into a team that will move forward towards the same goals and in the same spirit.

As the members become increasingly aware that they are participating in a leadership training program—in our case, in an apostolic work—they realize that the weekly meeting itself is not the heart of their apostolate, albeit essential to it. Rather, the weekly meeting becomes a kind of planning session, a dialogue between the members as they struggle towards modes of action. The heart of the apostolate, however, comes in between meetings through the exercises of responsibilities. Catholic Action does not take place at the meeting table. Leadership is not exercised at the meeting

table. The will is not strengthened at the meeting table. Those who attend the weekly meetings cannot be satisfied with this much. What they do when they are not attending the meeting is the real test of their leadership.

Many Facets of Leadership

Leadership can be exercised in many ways. At times, it may be through conversations with those with whom we live and work. At times, it may be through small personal services to those in need. Or, in less dramatic ways such as mimeographing, getting out mailings, attending conferences, or in performing anonymous tasks required to execute a project. It may be exercised by good example, or simply by being present at situations where you are ordinarily not expected to be present. The ways of being responsible, of being influential, of being Christian, are many.

Some of our actions, thus, are personal actions. They are actions we alone can perform among those with whom we come in natural contact. These are opportunities for us to love, to show friendship, to meet head-on peculiar situations that happen in our environment. No one can perform these personal actions except ourselves. If we fail to perform them, chances are they will not be performed at all. They appeal to our special talents, to whatever God-given qualities of soul we might possess. Nonetheless, they are social acts, influential acts, and marks of leadership.

Other actions have a different quality and a different end result. We might never see the result of our action; certainly, we will never be able to measure its result. We might, for example, perform a very small but essential part in carrying out a successful project that may perhaps influence hundreds of people. I'm thinking now of the dating forums we have conducted for young people in the parish, or the book fairs, and of course our parish library project. In all these projects, to make them successful, many odd jobs had to be done, almost always in an anonymous way, too, in getting out publicity, lining up speakers, making arrangements, selling books after Mass, and so on. The parish library, for example, once in operation will influence hundreds of people for years to come—long after we have moved away or passed away. The existence of the library itself will mean a new institution in our parish, something that didn't exist before.

Our part in the whole project seems very insignificant and unglamorous, too, and far re-

moved from the final result. Yet without our small contribution—no matter on what level—the result might never come about. Thus this kind of impersonal action, devoid of much human warmth or response, can nevertheless have far-reaching results and far-reaching social consequences, the extent of which we will really never know. Yet how important such projects are and how dependent their success is upon the working together of many people imbued with the same spirit. Surely this kind of social action is an exercise of leadership. And it is the kind of action a small group can initiate which no one person by himself would dream of attempting.

Lead in Developing Leaders

To bring about such results requires a special leadership. The members of a small group—all the while they are becoming leaders—themselves need leadership. If we might express it this way, we can say that the leaders need to be led. All of us are at various stages along the route towards fully developed leadership, depending upon our involvement in the apostolate, our acceptance of responsibility, our capacity for growth. Not all of us are at the same stage of formation, however, and because of this, we ourselves need leadership. One among us—perhaps several—must take the group as his personal responsibility to see to it that the leadership process is at work, to see that all of us are developed to our full potentiality and at the rate of speed our personality permits.

Since you are the newly chosen leader of our group, Tom, I want to discuss some of these qualities of leadership as I see them now after a year's experience as your predecessor. What are the special responsibilities you now have to the group? How shall you bring the group to full efficiency? In a word, how shall you replace yourself by bringing up new leaders from the rear? None of this will happen haphazardly through the very gimmick of bringing a small group into existence and making one member president of it. Rather, it must be a conscious effort. And remember this, Tom, in the very act of leading us, you will realize your own potentiality as a leader.

Group Needs Varied Talents

We might make this observation at the very outset, that while almost any young fellow or girl can be changed by the leadership training

process of a small group, not everyone can lead a small group. This might be helpful in resolving the oft-discussed problem of who can be a member of a Catholic Action group. It has been argued that only the so-called "natural" leaders are possible members. That might be so, in the sense of eventually becoming the leader of the group, but it is a false premise on which to build up membership. Ordinary young fellows and girls can benefit from the small group experience, can be trained, can be drawn out, can be brought to full capacity; in short, can become influential social actionists — influential lay apostles. We might add that the greater the diversity of talents in any group, the more effective it will be. We do not want to be choosy in forming apostolic teams. We do not want to be restrictive in recruiting. Form an elite of leaders, yes, but almost anyone is a potential member of an elite.

To give leadership to the group itself, however, is a different question, and on this level I believe there is something to the "natural" leader concept, even though we must never become too rigid in our specifications along this line. It is easier to describe some of the qualities of leadership required than to define a so-called "natural" leader. I prefer this method of proceeding. We are speaking now of the young fellow who is chosen to lead a Catholic Action group. What qualities should he strive to develop within himself?

Apostolic Vision

First of all, Tom, you will need a vision of the apostolate, an over-all view of what you are striving for. You must see your apostolic team in the context of the apostolate of the Church and not become so enamored of your own apostolate as to identify it with the Church. You must see the Church of Christ in its fullness, with many areas of interest and many anxieties, with many facets and many potentialities, and within this perspective you must see your own particular apostolate — the Young Christian Workers — as a part of the whole, but also as that part you and your associates are providentially in a realistic position to act upon. There will be no far-away look in your eye, but rather a realistic appraisal of your own situation in time and place and of the work that is possible within such a limited framework. The social inquiry will give you this realism. This means simply a constant effort to deal with situations in their own human dimensions.

There is nothing more destructive to an apostolic group than the attitude on the part of the leader that the work is small, insignificant, unimportant in the context of the pressing problems of the world today. Rather, you more than all the others must reveal a basic optimism, a basic confidence in the work being done, a basic enthusiasm for it, and a sense of joy at being so involved in the drama of a particular apostolate. Any man-sized job can only be done on a narrow but clearly defined scale, within the oftentimes exasperating human dimensions of all those involved.

You must be the optimist, Tom, the enthusiast; you must exude confidence; your convictions and spirit of dedication must be contagious, to the point that all the others will be caught up in your enthusiasm and joy, no matter how difficult or heart-breaking the work may at times appear. You must be more convinced than the others, more committed, more devoted, more self-sacrificing. You must set the tone; be the taskmaster; be the one who never wavers, who never loses faith or heart, who never is depressed over setbacks. This might be summed up as "foolishness for Christ's sake."

Such faith is part of the vision that while we work in time, we work for eternity; that while we deal with human situations, we cannot fathom results which only God can see; that while we hope for success in measurable terms, we may be complete failures in human terms. Faith, vision, an over-all view, hope in God's Wisdom, awareness of our own human limitations in mediating between God and man — these are attitudes of mind which you must bring to your group.

Must Grow in Responsibility

Vision sets the attitude towards the work to be done and creates the spirit in which the work is attacked. But vision is not enough. The world is full of men of vision who failed to tie it down to reality. They are the idle dreamers. As a leader, you must be a realist. You must grapple with problems as well as talk about them. You must set the tone for the acceptance of responsibilities. You must live out your convictions. No task is too small for you to tackle personally. You will accept responsibilities on your own; carry out responsibilities with your team; and only finally permit your team members to carry out responsibilities without you. It is your task to bring your team along in this matter of responsibility, by

assigning them tasks they can handle, by working with them at first in order to build their confidence and self-reliance, then by sending them out to carry their own burdens.

All this requires, of course, that you familiarize yourself with the capacities of your team members. You must know each in such a personal way that you can bring each along at the rate of development equal to his willingness to progress and his ability to accept increased responsibilities. Some may not require as much patient handling as others; some may be sufficiently mature—through previous experience—to take hold without a carefully planned program of responsibility. Some may have enough natural abilities to take hold without much else than encouragement. Others may need close personal attention, infinite patience, careful handling, gentle admonition, inspiration, and detailed help along the way. To each you must adjust yourself psychologically.

But all will need to be projected into many kinds of situations in your attempt to broaden their vision, test their reactions, try their talents, open their resources. All will need to be talked to in an intimate way, helped with their reading, in their deficiencies. All will need to be challenged by different kinds of actions—in areas of work, family, neighborhood, parish, community—to sharpen their sensitivities. You must keep your eyes open in all these areas so rich in possibilities for action and see that your members round out their vision in all these areas, not in any theoretical way but by somehow coming to grips with the realities of all these areas of action. A small responsibility will do the trick. It is the carrying out of responsibilities that will concretize these areas in one's personal life and bring the problems down into the range of personal experience. As the leader, you must see to it that your team has such experiences, each according to his capacity.

A man ringing three doorbells in a political election, helping out one poor family in the neighborhood, counselling two teen-agers on a street corner, circulating one petition at his place of work, instructing one child in religion in the parish will have placed his hands on the basics of politics, family life, the neighborhood, work life, and the parish. He will have had a personal experience in each area, one that will in some way change him and his outlook. The abstract will have been made concrete in a most realistic way. Simple actions but profoundly influential in the life of a potential leader.

Test of the Leader

Because the apostolate is an "out-going" to others, you must be the number one contact man in your group. You yourself must go out to others before you can expect your team to do so. Contact-making, out-going to others—these are the great test of the apostolic leader and often the most difficult aspect of the work. It requires courage to make a new contact, to follow up on contacts, to place phone calls, to send out reminders, to recruit new members, to build up an ever larger sphere of friends and acquaintances—all with an eye to extending the reaches of our apostolate.

A restlessness for Christ will not allow a group to turn in on itself, to become a cozy, self-enclosed ghetto, in which everything is comfortable and everyone is congenial. Nothing but sterility can result from self-containment—a deadening spiritual sterility as well as apostolic sterility. Meetings can be delightful, a good time might be had by all; but no leaders will develop. A group not fully aware of the apostolic dimensions of its mission—and what group is ever fully aware?—can easily become a complacent group of friends unless you—the leader with vision—keep it from so becoming. You will set the example in making new contacts. You will set up situations in which new contacts can be made. You will go out of your way to attend functions—social, athletic, etc.—where young people gather and where you can move among them and get to know them by name. You cultivate friendships, not in any artificial way and not in a propagandistic way, but freely, easily, naturally by your outgoing to others. You help young people feel at ease, welcome, wanted, accepted. Your heart is big enough to embrace all. Finally, you make yourself available to help young people. You get to know them best by serving them. Availability, service, friendship—in a word, love—these are the marks of a youth leader.

Spiritual Leadership with Chaplain

One final and important quality of apostolic leadership. The leader must give spiritual leadership to his group. This in no way takes away from the function of the chaplain. Instead, it underlies his role in motivating the leader. He brings the leader along to spiritual maturity by frequent contact with him and by keeping the goals of the apostolate always clearly fixed in the minds of all the members of the apostolic team. Despite the presence of

the chaplain, it is inconceivable that the leader be indifferent to the spiritual realities involved in the apostolate.

The social action we have been speaking of, Tom, is not a vague, humanitarian do-goodism. It is the work of the Church—the work of Christ—and it has its roots in the life of the Church. Our work must constantly be vitalized by the spirituality which the Church offers mankind. We might well ask what are some of the outlines of this spirituality which must vivify our work and bring it to fruition.

We find these broad outlines built into the very format of our Catholic Action movements. Gospel inquiries and liturgy discussions familiarize us with the life of Christ and His approach to human situations and, in the liturgy, the sacramental presence of the events of Christ's life in the worship life of the Church. We have an opportunity to re-learn all the truths of our faith through the Gospel narrative and the liturgical life of the Church. In the social inquiry we have an opportunity to apply our Christian truths to real life situations. Thus do the meetings themselves conspire to mold us in the image of Christ.

Nonetheless, all of this must be exemplified, first of all, in the members but most of all in the leader. It will be your love for the Church, the Mass, the Sacraments, in a word, your love for Christ, that will inspire the others and bring them gradually to a savoring of Christ. It will be your spirit of prayer for the work, too, that will draw down graces upon the group. Your prayers must always be a very specific prayer, a very personal dialogue with God to help this member and that project, to bless this meeting or overcome that obstacle. You must talk to God about your apostolate in a very personal way and in silence, no matter how fatiguing the life of action might be or how frequent the meetings, how demanding the responsibilities, how exhausting the efforts. Unless all your apostolic efforts be nourished by prayer, there will be little spiritual progress in the group. Your chaplain will help you become dependent upon the divine assistance at every stage of the work.

Apostolic Effects of Prayer

Thus will you enlarge your vision, deepen your commitment, and nourish your apostolic out-going to others. Thus will you charge all your qualities of leadership with the Divine Life. Thus will you release all your powers and communicate the spirit of conquest to your

fellow team members. And thus, too, will the inspiration of your chaplain manifest itself.

You begin now to see the importance of working closely with your chaplain. It is a painstaking task to open the eyes of a leader to the vast dimensions of his membership in the Mystical Body of Christ. Only little by little will you discover new insights to the truths of a faith you have always accepted more or less at face value, with little reflection on its implications in the whole of life.

To discover all this is breath-taking. To discover the liturgical life of the Church, not in any dry, rubrical manner, but as it should be lived and shared by all in our parishes, is breath-taking. To have a first-hand acquaintance with the words and actions of Christ in all the situations of His daily life, to taste the delights of personal charity among those in need, to see people and institutions change for the better, and yes, even to experience the cross-carrying involved in the work—the long hours, the endless meetings, the fatigue of going out to people—all this, I say, is the content of a genuine religious experience possible to all of those who give themselves to some form of the lay apostolate. Can we dare estimate the richness of such a life which brings to us a foretaste of heaven while we are still on earth?

Providential Role

To lead an apostolic team, therefore, is a tremendous responsibility. It is not simply chairing a weekly meeting, not simply a question of leading a good discussion. When through the Providence of God our team chose you as our leader, you were selected from among us to be the driving force of our team for a given period of time. When that period ends, there must be others ready to assume the responsibility. The process of forming leaders at the grass roots level will be never-ending.

Of course, we all envision the day when these leaders trained at the parish level will rise to the top of our youth movements, our political and labor organizations, our civic and community associations, and of all our professional groupings. We realize that before we can hope for any reconstruction of the social order along Christian lines, we must multiply our efforts at leadership training in small groups in our local parish neighborhoods. These will be the seeding ground for the Christian social leaders of tomorrow.

Here we rest the case for the small group

approach to leadership training. We do so, not unaware that we have yet to answer Harry's very honest problem of how to reach greater numbers. Perhaps we can approach Harry's problem by discussing our Young Adults Club in the parish, for it is a broad membership type of organization. While it is not designed as a leadership training ground, in the apostolic sense of the word leadership, we cannot deny that it, too, is a framework in which leadership can be exercised.

The Broad Membership Group

I believe it a fair statement to say that the Young Adults Club is largely a social organization. It came into existence to meet a very definite need; namely, to provide a meeting ground for young fellows and girls in our parish and to develop activities which would bring them together socially. We all know now what a great need there was in our parish for such an organization. It would be interesting to find out how many of the some 100 paid members we have today knew one another before the club was formed. From what I can gather, very few knew the others existed—a not uncommon phenomenon in large urban parishes where people can come and go without making contacts or getting to know their fellow parishioners.

We look upon the Young Adults Club as a real asset to the parish, and to our Catholic Action work, too. By its social activities—dances, plays, athletic events, picnics, parties—it appeals to a great number of young people desperate for something to do and somewhere to go. We look upon these young people—each and every one—as potential members of apostolic teams. We look upon the Club itself as an organization whose spiritual sights we hope to raise. Certainly the Dating Forums and the Day of Recollection, to cite two examples, were well attended and well received when our Catholic Action team sponsored them under the auspices of the Young Adults Club. They revealed a genuine interest on the part of these young people for something other than social, even though the primary goals of the club are social.

The larger Young Adults Club also has become a place where we can exercise our latent talents of leadership—organizational abilities, speaking abilities, committee work, planning—all those elements needed to develop an effective and comprehensive youth program in the parish.

From the still somewhat meager experiences at St. Francis de Paula, it would seem that a fully rounded youth program in a parish would include both a general membership club as well as a small, leadership training program. Both the large group and the small group are needed. Both have their functions: one to appeal (through social activities) to all the youth in the neighborhood and bring them into contact with the Church; and the other to train leaders, interest young people in apostolic work, and help develop a social awareness among them and a deeper identification with the missionary goals of a parish.

The lesson we have learned is this. Neither a Young Adults Club nor a Young Christian Workers group is difficult to start. The basic needs for both exist in almost every neighborhood. Those who hesitate to make the beginning can be consoled by the fact that the richest resource of any youth program are the young people themselves. There is an almost boundless amount of talent, energy, resourcefulness and good will among young people. It need only be tapped and given outlets.

Any youth leader working on this assumption will be successful.

THE CHURCH IN THE TEMPORAL ORDER: HER SOCIAL MISSION

(Continued from page 6)

varied needs of mankind. This means keeping a filial attachment to the Church and her doctrine. It also means keeping up with the progress of the world and meeting the challenges of the day. Would St. Thomas be satisfied with the *Summa* in the context of the present world situation? I am sure that, true to himself and to his vocation as a scholar, he would be seeking to master personally or through a team of scholars all the new scientific and technical advances, all the latest achievements of human genius, in order to build a new synthesis as Cardinal Suhard challenges Catholic leaders to do in the twentieth century.

¹ E. Card. Suhard, "Growth or Decline," *The Church Today* (Chicago: Fides, 1953), pp. 93-94.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

³ Walter Farrell, O.P., "Twentieth Century Apostles," *Thomist*, 10:143, April 1947.

⁴ Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931.

⁵ Pius XII, Christmas message, 1942.

Principles of Christian Action

J. M. Perrin, O.P.

Desire for the Kingdom of God

WHATEVER incites to action, directs and sustains it, as a whole and in each of its details, both at its beginning and in its progress, is the end to be attained. The will to victory and love of country inspires the most humble soldier as well as the highest commander. Only the commander-in-chief plans the campaign as a whole, but the hidden heroism of the unknown private who sacrifices his life is inspired by the same will to victory. It is not difficult to imagine the debacle which might ensue should self-interest and negligence blot out the vision of the goal; each one would then think only of finding shelter for himself.

The goal proposed by Jesus Christ to His disciples is the establishment of the kingdom of God. This term chosen by our Divine Master is deliberately all-encompassing, so much so that our limited concepts cannot begin to exhaust its content. It is the glorious coming of God into the world; it is His claim upon men and their institutions. The kingdom of God is at the same time interior and spiritual, social and universal. It helps humanity advance towards its goal by the impregnation of the Gospel and the divinization of all human values. "The City of God will encompass the universe" — but that will be achieved only in eternity, when "God will be all in all."

St. Paul expresses the same idea when he speaks of the "establishment of all things in Christ," "Christ who is all in all," of Christ who grows and completes Himself in us.

"That the Gospel might be preached to every creature," "that all men may come to knowledge of the truth," "that the world may acknowledge the divine mission of Christ and the infinite love to which He leads His own," "that the Father may be glorified by the whole world." These challenges to Christian action are at the same time personal and universal, immediate and eternal.

Thus Christian effort takes its measure: limited solutions; total commitment. The honor of God and the designs of Christ have been entrusted to us. Men, individually and collectively, have been handed over to us, and we must love them as the Lord loves us. The world in its entirety must be subject to Christ and saved by His love.

This consciousness of the absoluteness of its task helps to maintain the vigor and strength of action. An endeavor which stops growing is already on the decline, as in a fountain the jet of water which no longer rises is already falling back. "*The defensive is the death of armed insurrection,*" said Lenin, speaking of the strategy of revolution. The Christian must never be on the defensive; he must always be in the vanguard to serve and to save. This is the essence of the missionary spirit.

The soul of Christian action, which leads us to accept and promote our Master's plan, is love; not an imaginary sentiment or that impersonal affability some imagine to be love, but true charity — "that love which the Holy Spirit pours into our hearts" and which makes us love God and love what God loves in the way that He loves it.

Important and praiseworthy though it may be, a piety which is interested only in the outer worship of God and in what it calls "the supernatural," which can see nothing except a perfection which is a superstructure unrelated to ordinary life, will never be sufficient for Christian action. What is necessary is a genuine charity which orients our effort toward the positive and universal reign of God and dedicates our activities to the cause of Christ. The Christian should recall the famous line of the Roman poet and say, without restricting it to the priesthood, as Father Perreyve did, "I am a Christian and nothing divine or human is outside my experience."

This supreme goal is also the wellspring of limited action. This is universally true: despite appearances to the contrary, men cannot be genuinely enthusiastic, persevere to the end, or sacrifice themselves except for some absolute value. Frequently those who disparage zealous men who are dedicated to false ideals and accuse

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them of self-interest do not recognize the deep-seated nobility of a soul created for God; they are not aware of the power of error when it appears in the guise of good. Many have fallen into erroneous ways without looking for or expecting any personal advantage.

The Christian man of action must be on the alert to preserve in himself and to sustain in his fellow workers a constant and steadfast orientation to the Absolute, a manifestation of that living possession by charity without which the dynamism of action soon dies out. No one who is not always conscious of working for a great cause can continue to do difficult things well.

Action is comprised of unimportant works, humble sacrifices, insignificant activities, none of which, taken alone, seems important enough to make a serious effort. This negligence is easy for those who forget the central objective.

Leaders of Christian action groups should take every opportunity to emphasize and make clear this absolute ideal of charity. The leaders must try to maintain and direct the flame of enthusiasm in those committed to his care. But enthusiasm is not merely a matter of high-flown emotion. The limitless spheres of action, the immense realities, divine and human, involved in the endeavor attest to the nobility of the effort.

An Abyss of Secularism

An impassioned attention to the divine aspect of our work will help us avoid materialization or secularization which are the death of Christian action. It is necessary here to sense the abyss which separates the priest or layman who is conscious of the infinite scope of his mission and the functionary who merely administers outer forms; between the militant trade unionist working for social justice and the self-serving politician; between the educator concerned to create children of God and the pedant. If the priest who has the care of souls thinks only of the administration of his parish, if the educator thinks only of his own success and makes his school a diploma mill, if the trade unionist is concerned only with politics instead of social justice, then catastrophe is imminent.

Real concern for the universal good is incompatible with jealousy and the partisan spirit. The success of a co-worker, the progress of another group cannot fail to please me also if I dwell in the universal Good. I rejoice in all that gladdens the Lord and He is delighted with everything good. Jealousy and group rivalries are a disgrace to Christianity, betrayal of divine confidence. Yet history and experience alike at-

test to their all-too-human occurrence. Such conditions are evidence that action remains on a sensual and egotistical level. "You are still carnal," was St. Paul's judgment of this situation.

The Christian is opposed to narrowness: his spirit is universal; he is a member of society; he is also a member of the Church. He may find it expedient to form a party, but he will never be partisan. He transcends all factionalism, as does the Christ who lives within him; he is the partisan only of what is good and true. "We are neither of the right, nor of the left, we are not even partisans of heaven, we embrace all sides," Thibon could say.

Integrity of the Person

Emphasis on the divine aspect of Christian action helps to avoid one of those evils which so often disfigures human action, and against which, sad to say, Christian action is not always on guard. In striving to attain the goal, we tend to become oblivious of others, and in trying to extend our activities abroad, we neglect what is in our own backyard. "The shoemaker's sons are poorly shod," says the proverb, and in our culture employees of religious organizations are often second-rate bunglers, mere flunkys, with no intellectual contacts and no understanding of the work which they are doing. Sometimes they are bullied or exploited and are spiritually undernourished, in spite of being near the oven where the bread is being baked for the multitude. The conflict between the respect due persons and the urgent exigencies of the work to be done can be solved in this way: do not offend or oppress anyone; rather explain the nature of the work being done and the goal all should strive for, then all can pull together to achieve it. Even though absorbed in the work at hand, charity recognizes the absoluteness of each individual, and knows that if there is ever any necessity of having to make a choice, the claims of the person supercede all others.

Charity is not only that which gives value to action in the eyes of God; it is the very soul of action. Christian action is impossible without charity to carefully define its boundaries: love for God and man, longing for the coming of His Kingdom.

The Providential Task

An immense love and longing for man fills the heart of God; the Absolute is vitally interested in our concerns. On our part, when we have a clear understanding of our own providential task, we should apply all our energies to the

work which our Master expects of us for the realization of His plan.

To have a vivid consciousness of the whole, to feel drawn up into its momentum, is essential to each member of the group. If the individual member is not vitally dependent on the whole and participating in its life, the whole is crippled to that extent. But more than that, each member serves the group by fulfilling his own particular function perfectly. If St. Paul's allegory of the body can picture for us love for the whole and harmony with other members, if it reveals the unity as well as the variety of functions, it can also make clear the importance of fidelity to one's own vocation in the Mystical Body.

This is accomplished through charity, because if it is genuine, it keeps growing by longing to do more and more. Charity cannot be satisfied with mere words or pious feelings; it is realistic and applies itself "without measure" to the task "measured out" and confided to each soul by the Lord.

Our first duty is to face up to this personal responsibility and discover our own providential task. Most often it is easy to recognize, since it comes as a commission from the Church. Whether it is the Bishop appointed by the Pope, the priest appointed by his Bishop, the religious commanded by his superior, or the layman authorized by the Hierarchy, at bottom it is the same divine call. "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

In other cases the providential task or vocation is indicated by a kind of concatenation of fortuitous circumstances and personal aptitudes. Such are vocations to teaching, medicine, politics, social service, journalism, etc. Each individual Christian has been given some special talent — for any superiority is a true talent and a responsibility in the meaning of the Gospel parable — and one has a duty to recognize this vocation confided to him by Providence. Enlightened by God, he must enter into this particular work, or we might more truly say, take possession of it, feeling himself besieged, as it were, by its possibilities and exigencies. The pastor, the missionary, the father of a family, the union leader — all must have a keen sense of their respective responsibilities. But how can one take on such a task he does not even know about? Here many people show an extreme superficiality and irresponsibility: they do not even bother to open their hands to appraise the talents the Master has given them!

It may be that our task seems lowly and without value, quite out of line with the energies and desires which seethe within us. This should

never be an excuse for giving it up and trying to find something else. The apostle does not simply give his labor; he gives himself. Even if it should be true that he is doing a work below his capabilities and thereby doing himself an injustice, *we should never forget that our outer work is only part of our action*. There is always the fecundity of prayer, of immolation, of work done purely for love. There is always room for an enlightened and energetic cross bearer! Large factories often depend on machinery which keeps turning ceaselessly in the dark. The pastor of the smallest parish in France is in his time also the most influential in the whole world. "A single soul is a splendid congregation."

Give Self to Duty

The duty recognized, it is necessary to accomplish it; the mission accepted, it must be completed. The nature of this mission is of no special importance, even if it goes contrary to our tastes and aspirations, even if it should exceed our capacities. From the moment obedience imposes it, or we honestly cannot find anyone else better qualified to take it over, we must put our entire selves into it. Even a mediocre man working at full capacity can accomplish a great deal; he can do everything through Christ who will give new strength, if he first does his best with what he has. Only too often, on the contrary, the richest gifts are undeveloped and wasted through negligence. The negligent man then becomes bitter, feeling that he has been cheated out of the opportunity of using his talents. He blames others or circumstances instead of recognizing where and how he has been at fault. In this connection, the fable of the hare and the tortoise is most illuminating.

Our Time Is God's

To throw oneself wholly into a work, one must on the one hand guard against over extension and dissipation, and on the other hand, concentrate all his resources on the task at hand. To avoid dissipation, it is necessary to husband one's time, but not as the miser holds onto his money or the maniac his mania. *Time is worth only as much as the use made of it, and he who fully realizes this always has enough*, as Father Sertillanges has observed. Our time belongs to God and His work, and through Him, to others.

Another form of dissipation is unordered activity, or lack of organization and method in doing the work. "Organization is the unity of multiplicity" and one cannot work vigorously and efficiently without it.

Distraction can result from having too many things to do. According to the proverb, "the man with a one-track mind is unconquerable," and the man with one thing to do is the man who gets the job done. However, often this is impossible; the workers are so few, and the harvest is so great that each has to multiply himself and do the job of several men. In situations like this, our duty is to give our full attention to each task, avoid feverishness and wrangling, and be careful that others, especially our fellow workers (partially for our own sakes, but mostly for theirs) are not made to suffer for our carrying an extra heavy load. Our time, our strength, are necessarily parceled out, but our whole attention can be given to each thing as it comes before us. I have only an hour, but it is all yours, and we have to work together to make the most of it. Lack of selectivity and concentration, however, will soon make us spread ourselves thin, like a spot of oil.

Concentrate Without Narrowing

Positively, to concentrate means to gather together one's faculties, fix one's attention and apply oneself to the task. Concentration calls down divine riches to the concrete level of action; we will return to this aspect later.

To speak of concentration and of one's own powers does not mean a narrowing of horizons. The farmer traces his furrow straight and true for long distances. One of the means of perfection will always be to keep oneself informed about progress in fields related to one's own. The teacher is interested in the activities of youth; the Catholic Actionist, in labor unions, and professional associations; the priest, in new methods of reaching the people. The Catholic lives in the Church and ought to become sensitive to the movements which the Divine Spirit ceaselessly produces in it.

Furthermore, one must establish and maintain contact with his fellow workers. How much energy is lost, how many errors are committed, how many fail to find their way because they try to work alone! But contacts made must be deep and genuine and guided by love of the same ideal and devotion to the same cause. The same solicitude should be given to collaboration with co-workers as with superiors.

Thus each member is nourished by the life of the whole body, just as he contributes to the whole all the richness of his own life in its own particular functioning in, by and for Christ, who is all in all. Thus he will be able to realize what St. Jerome meant when he said: "May no bit of good news ever pass you by."

Action in the Concrete

In the order of action, all is contingent. Action is a matter of persons and circumstances. The sphere of action is the shifting and deceptive field of human relationships and continually changing events. Even military action, in spite of its terrible sensibility, depends on a multitude of contingencies: the strength and plans of the enemy, the lay of the land and many other battle factors. Political action is unquestionably more complicated because it must consider a goodly number of data in the human order. What then can be said of moral action? It must take into account all human factors: exterior events, whether disasters or victories, the vagaries of opinion, mass psychology, environment, personal idiosyncrasies, and also, in Christian action, grace and its activity.

The farmer watches over his land, the architect studies his site, the militant — priest or lay — must make every effort to understand his field of action. "It is necessary to appraise men as one appraises houses to see what they are worth," said Foch in this regard. This is true not only of individuals but also of groups, centers of influence, and institutions where men work and which influence their thinking. A priest must keep himself informed on the different organizations, the reading material (newspapers and books), the movies which affect the ideas and reactions of his parishioners — those who come to Church as well as those who stay away. This is true in one way or another of all leadership, of all missionary activity, indeed, of all types of action.

It is also indispensable to become acquainted with those we hope to serve as well as with those we must oppose, especially the latter, for we must always have their good at heart. We should observe men, become acquainted with their ideas, the conditions under which they live, their aspirations, the dangers which threaten them and the things which will help them. In a word, we must be familiar with all aspects of life, especially with those relating to the kingdom of God. Such is the necessary preparation for action.

Understand Your Adversaries

Concerning adversaries, we should understand them and have that sympathy for them which the Good Shepherd has. This enables us to see their shortcomings and their errors clearly, but also to understand the reasons for them, their point of view. Isn't it necessary to come to Duhamel's realization: "Be able to put yourself in your opponent's place?" Father Lagrange recom-

mended that the book or article which is to be criticized or refuted should be read through several times, whereas one quick reading is sufficient for approbation.

How can the apostle "be all things to all men" if he cannot sympathetically understand those whom he wishes to save? Does not the expression, "to search for souls" suggest that this duty is indispensable?

The intuitional evaluation of a situation—that "sense of reality"—enables us to see what is possible, what is expedient. *The law of adaptation is the first law of action.* It shows the importance of what the military calls "intelligence." "It is not I," said Foch, "but necessity which is in command." "Necessity" means the general situation, the needs and circumstances of the present moment.

Unadaptable action is necessarily ineffective to the degree that it is unadapted; a chimerical spirit is inevitably fruitless; it feeds on vain dreams and its high flying ventures burst like so many soap bubbles. "Do not be satisfied with words," the great Master said in this regard, "or you will be satisfied with deception."

Adaptation Means Investigation

This shows the folly of arbitrary decisions, pat solutions or even routine changes in method. Life overflows beyond all of them. Action, to remain adapted to life, must ceaselessly renew itself, rejuvenate itself; and this can be unusually difficult when it concerns spiritual realities which are essentially immutable. The bearer of the Gospel message must remember that it is always fresh and new; that it never grows old. To present it in worn and tattered garments is to betray it. The first question: "What has always been done?" implies the second: "What is it necessary to do now?"

All too many projects are dashed to pieces against impossibilities; the man of action must distinguish between the possible, the actually possible, and the impossible. "Jesus is master of the impossible," but normally only after man has done all that he can.

A realistic and well informed vigilance is necessary to keep an eye on action itself. It is so easy for an activity to become decentralized and confused, especially if it requires teamwork and must be done quickly and efficiently. The leader must take stock of the situation, remind each one of his duty, re-orient him to the goal, point out his particular responsibility in attaining it, and anticipate the troubles which will arise along the way. "It is only with prudence, sagacity and

much skill," said Napoleon, "that one can attain great ends and overcome all obstacles . . . I have observed that a mere nothing can decide the greatest issues and influence the greatest events; the moment, the fortuitous event, is everything."

When this intuitional grasp of reality and sensitivity to the exigencies of a situation are in full operation, rigid regimentation as well as preoccupation with worrisome trifles can be avoided. The man of action must be discriminative when he is doing a great work; he cannot afford to treat each detail as an absolute but must always be able to locate it in its proper place in the whole.

The realistic sense must become self-critical, aware of its faults and errors. Nothing reveals seriousness and strength of endeavor better than this clear-seeing and sincere acknowledgment of one's imperfections. Lenin recognized this himself. It is the only way to progress and learn from experience. For example, after a church service, a priest asks himself if his people have been spiritually enriched by it, or, on the other hand, why they failed to come, or why they were disappointed. The military leader asks himself why his campaign failed; the politician asks why the meeting was poorly attended. And so on.

Thus, by the very fact that it is down to earth, action must guard against taking refuge in fixed forms, which quickly become outmoded but which, because they give a feeling of security, soon become routine and create an impression of accomplishment which as a matter of fact only serves to conceal the actually approaching dissolution. Action never indulges in vain regrets over what might have been; it has a horror of looking back because it has its being in the free flow of the existent and the becoming, the adaptable and the living. It is a far cry from the administrative spirit which puts abstract considerations before immediate duties, the routine before the exigent. "Extraordinary circumstances," says Napoleon, "necessitate extraordinary measures." Action is not far removed from anarchy and confusion, and thus it gives the Christian ideal an opportunity to blaze forth for all to see, as Gustav Thibon so profoundly remarks: "The value of an ideal is to be judged by its capacity for incarnation."

Methodical Action

According to Foch, the famous general, in warfare, intelligence (e.g., information), especially if it cannot be verified, can have only a secondary place in comparison with the energy

and determination which are the dynamics of action. In his view, the only requirement for success is to know what one wants to do and then do it.

Amid all the uncertainties and contingencies which beset action, we must be certain of at least one thing—the resources at our disposal. The most important of these resources is certainly strength of resolution and depth of perception. Let us once again translate the ideas of Foch into the idiom of Christian action. “I do not have any extraordinary ideas, but those which I do have, I realize.” “It is necessary to get ideas from everywhere, then make them a part of our own thought.”

This is a far cry from “those spirits who are too superior to consider ends proportioned to the available means.” “The war,” said Foch, “has shown me the necessity of having a goal, a plan, a method, to be successful,” which is to say: know what you want to do, what you can do, and what means can be used to accomplish the desired end; in short, you must have your ideas and concentrate your efforts in order to succeed. To be that *irreproachable worker* of whom St. Paul speaks to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:15), it is not enough to have good intentions and grandiose dreams. Professional know-how and stick-to-it-iveness are what get results.

Plan Thoroughly

First of all, you must have a plan and know what you want to do. In action you cannot improvise without throwing things into confusion. Some endeavors fail to bear fruit because they have not been pushed vigorously enough; on the contrary, other activities will grow so large that the effectiveness of the whole is impaired. A plan obviously requires a clear idea of the end to be accomplished, such as this parish to be converted, this neighborhood to be Christianized, these people to be instructed. But it also requires the setting up of immediate goals and the perception of their relationships to the final goal. Action admits of retreats and temporizations, advances and improvements, thorough experimentation; all of which will finally develop into a genuine method and a capacity for clear seeing which will be able, in spite of the necessity for adaptation to circumstances and the unforeseen, to remain fixed on the final goal.

As a general rule, the immediate goal is the most important as being actually possible of achievement. Such a limited goal is most important at first, because it is necessary at all costs to avoid that almost inevitable bickering

which scatters and fritters away one's resources. Nothing is more fatal to action than a readiness to undertake every job that comes along, to let oneself be drawn into every controversy or accept every challenge. The result of such a tendency is for the main effort to be swallowed up in a multiplicity of petty unrelated activities, and no results are obtained. The immediate objective can be used as a springboard for launching a more ambitious project later. For example, it might consist in a new formation of co-workers, the result of a current of thought, or perhaps clearing up an unfortunate prejudice, giving some needed instruction, correcting some abuse or other, or even finding a more vulnerable point in the adversary's armor, how do I know? Even in individual action, like the direction of souls or teaching, there are strategic points (consciences to awaken, faults to conquer) which must be held if new advances are to be made.

One should be most solicitous to find these important focal points, but it is not enough simply to recognize their intrinsic value. We must also be able to judge their practicality at any given moment. This practicality depends in the first place on our resources: “know what you can do.” That is why it is so advantageous to gather together our forces and concentrate our efforts in view of immediate results. Thus, action proceeds by jumps, by phases. This is the strategy of certain of our Catholic Action movements.

The concentration of our forces necessitates the intelligent organization of resources: utilization of technical methods to increase them while systematizing them, to avoid waste or loss, and to reinforce each by the others. Organization, far from constricting the versatility and adaptability of action, serves rather to strengthen it and makes it possible to get the most out of concomitant circumstances. Order is helpful in attaining our objectives.

Rely on Common Sense

These remarks on the determination of immediate ends, the concentration of forces and an ever present awareness of the goal to be attained, are of great significance. They give a clue to the most advantageous mode of action, which obviously varies according to the objective. There is one method suitable for educational action, another for parochial action, still another for missionary action, and yet another for political action. This is why we have need, not only of our own thought, but also of the experience and instruction of others.

That is only common sense, one might say. But is it such a common thing to use good common sense? So many people, otherwise intelligent enough, never think of using their intelligence in their action. This is why education, formation by another, is so important in this matter. We learn to open our eyes to values outside ourselves. "Without a revolutionary theory," said Lenin, "there is no revolutionary movement." This is true of all kinds of action. We can only deplore the absence of this emphasis in our own function. In addition to logic, which teaches us how to use our reason, and rhetoric, which teaches us the use of language, why should there not be a course in Christian action for priests and lay apostles somewhat like the study of strategy by military cadets?

Note, however, that there is no question of believing that abstract theories should replace personal effort. The first misconception to correct is the belief that something will work all by itself, automatically. "The principles governing the use of means are of value only when adapted to circumstances. He who takes advantage of them is the conqueror; he who ignores them is conquered," said de Gaulle. Because of the concrete character of action, an abstract course of study is less efficacious in the formation of apostles than the direction of him who instructs more by example than by precept and who helps by his personal contact to awaken the personal potentialities of each disciple. From an example, we learn not to attack a problem without having studied all the facts. We learn to look ahead, to adapt oneself, to discipline our efforts, to initiate activity only if there is no danger of dissipating our energies or attention. In a word, to be effective we must be methodical.

We could well do some research on the laws of action by studying the lives of great men of action, for example: Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, and their lieutenants; Gallieni and Lyautey; St. Dominic, St. Ignatius and their first companions; and many others. In fact, all those who, whatever their sphere of activity, have left a spiritual posterity.

OBJECTIVES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL ACTION

(Continued from page 11)

iciency of social justice and charity. It is hard to bring remote issues close. People like to wait until Hannibal and his elephants are at the gates. Yet we can get through with certain issues and create some impressions. This was

proved by the spate of interest developed over the "right to work" laws. The members of the Christian Family Movement were stirred by their discussion of this subject to think about unions, the right to organize and the province of government as many of them had never thought before. We must keep our social action movement in motion and do what is possible. Perhaps no single activity will have imposing results, but at the very least all together will add up to a general impression of Catholic concern for what is right and just and will serve to develop, however gradually, the Catholic conscience.

¹ Rt. Rev. Msgr. John A. Ryan, *Social Doctrine in Action* (New York: Harper, 1941), p. 288.

APOSTOLIC PERSPECTIVES

*A Quarterly Devoted to
the Apostolate of the Church*

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Review of the Apostolate

SOCIAL ACTION SURVEYS

Occupational Guilds and Associations

IN RECENT years Catholic groups and associations formed along occupational lines have sprung up in many sections of the country. The strongest and best organized are to be found among the professions, like doctors, lawyers, and nurses. Some are basically communion-breakfast organizations bringing together employees of the same business or occupation.

Only a few organizations have indicated any real awareness of making the guild a means of persuading Catholic laymen to be active in their unions, professional organizations, etc. Such guilds, if not so orientated, could easily compete for the time, devotion and loyalty of men and women who are also union members, members of a professional or management association. The Albertus Magnus Guild, for example, was formed with the clear understanding that it would not compete with the professional responsibilities of the scientist but would actually encourage member-scientists to be more active in the various scientific bodies.

The list compiled here is not complete. It is only a beginning. It specifically excludes Catholic organizations which are made up of Catholic institutions (like the Catholic Hospital Association or the National Catholic Cemetery Conference) or organizations composed of employees working exclusively for Catholic agencies.

Accountants

Catholic Accountants Guild of the Diocese of Brooklyn, 915 Putnam Avenue, Brooklyn 21, New York. This group has been active in starting Catholic accountant guilds in other dioceses. Father Matthew Kelly is spiritual moderator.

Catholic Accountants Guild of the Archdiocese of Boston. Father Arthur W. Riley is spiritual moderator.

Catholic Accountants Guild, 1138 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California. Father Benjamin Hawkes is chaplain. Other guilds are located in Denver, Detroit and New York. National membership is estimated at 825.

Actors

Catholic Actors Guild, Hotel Astor, New York 19, New York. George Buck, executive secretary. 1,200 members. Publication: *The California Board*.

Airline Employees

Catholic Aviation League (separate branches for men and women), 916 South Wolcott Street, Chicago, Illinois. Father John Marren is chaplain.

Bus Drivers

Guild of St. Christopher, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Business and Professional Men

Serra International, 38 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois. 147 chartered clubs in 35 states. Publication: *The Serran*. Harry J. O'Haire is executive secretary.

Te Deum International, Box 943, Springfield, Illinois. Groups in 43 cities in 8 states.

Catholic Institute of the Food Industry, 60 William Street, New York 5, New York. 400 members.

Antonians, San Antonio, Texas.

John Carroll Society, 916 Union Trust Building, Washington, D.C. 500 members.

Catholic Business and Professional Men's Club, % Paul Tafel, 329 West Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky.

Business Women

The Carroll Club, New York, New York.

Catholic Business Women's League, Nashville, Tennessee. Father Edward Dolan is moderator.

St. Camillus Club, Columbia, South Carolina.

Dentists

St. Apollonia Guild, St. Louis University Dental School, St. Louis, Missouri.

We present in this issue the results of three surveys made in preparation for the National Catholic Social Action Conference, September 7-9 at Xavier University, New Orleans, under the direction of Monsignor George Higgins of the Social Action Department of N.C.W.C. —Ed.

Guild of St. Apollonia, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Guild of St. Apollonia, 476 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts. 500 members.

Doctors

The Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guild, 1438 South Grand Boulevard, St. Louis 4, Missouri. M. R. Kneifl is executive director. Local groups are either called the St. Luke's Guild or the Catholic Physicians' Guild. Publication: *The Linacre Quarterly*.

Druggists

Druggists' Guild of St. James, 21-23 East 11th Street, Covington, Kentucky. Twelve branches in four states.

Cosmas and Damian Pharmacy Guild, Los Angeles, California. James E. Liautaud is president.

Cosmas-Damian Guild, San Francisco, California. Father Bernard Cronin is chaplain. 120 members.

Government Employees

Catholic Court Attaches Guild, 52 Chambers Street, New York 7, New York. 2,000 members in 49 units.

St. Gabriel's League (for post office and other federal employees), Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Msgr. John J. Grasser is chaplain.

Dongan Guild of New York State Employees, 55 Franklin Street, New York 13, New York. 1,700 members.

Industrial Workers (girls and women)

St. Joseph's Guild (for girls and women working in industry), Cenacle Convent, Middletown, Connecticut.

Insurance Men

Catholic Insurance Guild, % Paul A. Hazard, Jr., 105 West Adams Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

Lawyers

There are guilds (named after St. Thomas More or called simply, Catholic Lawyers' Guilds) in the following cities: New York, Rockland County (New York), Brooklyn, Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Lehigh and Northampton Counties (Pennsylvania), Buffalo, Washington, New Orleans, Dubuque, Bridgeport (Connecticut), Winona (Minnesota), Portland (Maine and Oregon), Minneapolis-St. Paul, Fort Wayne, Worcester (Massachusetts), Joliet (Illinois), San Antonio, Newark, Phoenix (Arizona), Dallas-Fort Worth, Paterson (New Jersey), Troy (New York). Chief activity is usually the celebration of the Red Mass at the opening of the courts each year. Many dioceses have a Red Mass but no society.

The Catholic Lawyers' Guild of Chicago (Edward R. Tiedebohl, President, Suite 604, 100 North LaSalle Street, Chicago 2, Illinois) has prepared a mimeographed directory of places where the Red Mass is offered annually and where lawyers' guilds exist or are planned.

Newspaper Employees (writers, advertising men, radio and TV magazine and publishing employees)

Catholic Institute of the Press, Hotel Biltmore, New York, New York. 950 members in Eastern United States.

St. Francis de Sales Society, Boston, Massachusetts. Monsignor Francis L. Lally, editor of *The Pilot*, 49 Franklin Street, Boston 10, Massachusetts, is spiritual adviser.

St. Francis de Sales Club, Detroit, Michigan. Monsignor Albert A. Matyn, rector of Sacred Heart Seminary, West Chicago Boulevard at Linwood, is spiritual director.

Guild of St. Francis de Sales, 2200 Grand Avenue, St. Paul 1, Minnesota. Father Richard T. Doherty is moderator.

San Francisco Association of Catholic Newsmen, San Francisco, California.

Catholic Writers' Guild of America, 128 West 71st Street, New York 23, New York. 200 members.

Gabriel Guild, Chicago, Illinois. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph Lux, 1307 South Wabash Avenue, is spiritual director.

Nurses

National Council of Catholic Nurses, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, Northwest, Washington 5, D.C. Anne V. Houck, executive secretary. 208 chapters within 87 diocesan councils. Publication: *Catholic Nurse*.

Oil Employees

Catholic Petroleum Guild, Boston, Massachusetts. Msgr. Ralph J. Gallagher is spiritual director.

Personnel Directors

Guild of St. Joseph, 2200 Grand Avenue, St. Paul 1, Minnesota. Father Richard T. Doherty is moderator.

Policemen

St. Jude's League, 221 West Madison Street, Chicago, Illinois. (Policemen's branch.)

Psychiatrists

Guild of Catholic Psychiatrists, 134 Farmington Street, Hartford, Connecticut. Rt. Rev. Msgr. John J. Hayes, Stamford, Connecticut, is chaplain. 200 members.

Railroad Men

Order of St. Christopher, 916 North Western Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Father Valerian

Rezek, national chaplain. Chapters in Rawlins, Cheyenne, and Green River, Wyoming; Clinton, Iowa; Ogden, Utah; Denver, Colorado; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Holds regular communion breakfasts, sponsors days of recollection. Aim is "to bring Christ closer to the many thousands of American railroad workers who need Him." Estimated membership, 3,500.

Scientists

Albertus Magnus Guild. Father Patrick H. Yancey, S.J., Spring Hill College, Mobile, Alabama, executive director. 600 members. Publication: *Catholic Science Notes*.

Seamen

Apostleship of the Sea, 711 Camp Street, P.O. Box 942, New Orleans, Louisiana. Father Thomas A. McDonough, executive director. Sets up Catholic maritime clubs now located in Brooklyn; Newport News, Virginia; Mobile, Alabama; New York, New York; Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; San Francisco, California; San Pedro, California; Wilmington, California. Publication: *Catholic Maritime News*.

Social Workers

Catholic Social Workers Guild, Detroit, Michigan. Father W. F. Suedkampof of Archdiocesan Catholic Charities is spiritual director.

Teachers

Aquin Guild, 205 West Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois. Father Lawrence W. Lynch is director. 4,500 members.

Guild of the Holy Spirit, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Telephone Employees

Catholic Women Telephone Employees, Syracuse, New York. Father William J. Shannon is moderator.

Guild of Our Lady of the Bell, Worcester, Massachusetts.

EDWARD MARCINIAK
The Catholic Council on
Working Life, Chicago

Catholic Institutes of Industrial Relations and Labor Schools

Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, New York City (four parish schools) — Robert Mozer, President. Cleveland Chapter — Rev. George A. Schneider; Camden Chapter — Rev. George E. Sharkey; Gary Chapter — Rev. Matthew J. Kish; Detroit Chapter — Rev. Karl D. Hubble.

Brooklyn School of Social Action, Queens School of Social Action, Nassau-Suffolk School of Social Action — Rev. William G. Kelly; Rev. Joseph Hammond, Asst.

Cardijn Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin — Rev. Eugene F. Bleidorn.

Catholic Conference on Social and Industrial Relations, Portland, Oregon — Rt. Rev. Msgr. Thomas J. Tobin, Director; Rev. Daniel J. Lyons, S.J., Asst.

Catholic Labor Guild of Boston (3 Extension Schools), Boston 18, Mass. — Rev. Francis McDonnell.

Catholic Labor School, Los Angeles, Calif. — Rev. Joseph Kearney; John F. Condon.

Creighton University, Institute of Industrial Relations, Omaha, Nebr. — Rev. Austin E. Miller, S.J.

Diocesan Labor College (7 District Schools), Buffalo, N.Y. — Very Rev. Msgr. S. A. Kulpinski.

Diocesan Labor Institute, Archdiocese of Hartford, Hartford, Conn. — Very Rev. Msgr. Joseph F. Donnelly.

Gonzaga University, School of Economics and Business Administration, Spokane 2, Wash. — Dr. Frank G. Wherry.

Institute of Industrial Relations, Helena Diocese — Rev. Joseph Mackin.

Holy Cross College, Institute of Industrial Relations, Worcester, Mass. — Rev. Hubert C. Callaghan, S.J.

LeMoyné College, Institute of Industrial Relations, Syracuse, N.Y. — Rev. Richard McKeon, S.J.

LeMoyné Industrial Council — Rev. Richard McKeon, S.J.

Loyola University, Institute of Social and Industrial Relations, Chicago, Ill. — Rev. Ralph A. Gallagher, S.J.

Loyola Industrial Relations Center (Foremen Classes), Los Angeles, Calif. — Rev. William McIntosh, S.J.

Industrial Relations School, Loyola High School, Los Angeles, Calif. — Rev. William McIntosh, S.J.

Loyola University, Institute of Industrial Relations, New Orleans, La. — Rev. Louis J. Twomey, S.J.

New Rochelle Labor School, College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, N.Y. — Rev. Thomas J. Darby.

Pope Pius XII Institute of Industrial Relations, Ramsey, N.J. — Rev. Aloysius J. Welsh.

Rockhurst College, Institute of Social Order, Kansas City, Mo. — Rev. A. E. Dudenhofer, S.J.; Harry B. Kies, Asst.

Social Action Institute, Diocese of Providence, Block Island, R.I. — Rev. John Duffy.

St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa — Rev. William T. O'Connor.

St. Joseph's Labor Management Center (Industrial Consultant Service), Charlestown, Mass. — Rev. Mortimer H. Gavin, S.J.

St. Joseph's College, Institute of Industrial Relations, Philadelphia, Pa. — Rev. Dennis J. Comey, S.J.

St. Peter's Institute of Industrial Relations, Jersey City, N.J.—Rev. William J. Smith, S.J.

St. Stephen's Church, Labor-Management Study Group, Pittsburgh, Pa.—Rev. Donald W. McIlvane.

St. Thomas Service Club, 8100 Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Ill.—Rev. John M. Hayes.

San Francisco University, Labor-Management School, San Francisco, Calif.—Rev. Andrew C. Boss, S.J.

Union Workshop (for Union Delegates), Seattle University—Rev. John L. Corrigan, S.J.

Scranton University, Institute of Industrial Relations, Scranton, Pa.—Rev. William G. Kelly, S.J.

Catholic Social Action Club, State University of New York, Delhi, N.Y. (plus in-plant courses on arbitration)—Rev. Joseph F. Lamanna.

Stonehill College, North Easton, Mass.—Rev. James J. Doyle, C.S.C.

Xavier Institute of Industrial Relations, New York City—Rev. Philip A. Carey, S.J.

Agencies of Motivation and Formation

Cardijn Center, 787 North Water Street, Milwaukee 2, Wisconsin.

Center of Information for Secular Institutes and Life of Total Dedication in the World, % Rev. Joseph Haley, C.S.C., University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana.

St. Gabriel School for Catholic Social Action, % Rev. Gerard Rooney, C.P., Passionist Monastery, 159 Washington Street, Brighton, Massachusetts.

Friendship House, 4233 South Indiana Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Study Action Group (% Mary Geaney), 23 Turner Street, Brighton 35, Massachusetts.

Young Christian Students, 1700 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago 12, Illinois.

Service Committees (% Robert Senser), 21 West Superior Street, Chicago 10, Illinois.

Christian Family Movement, 100 West Monroe Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

Young Christian Workers, 1700 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago 12, Illinois.

Method

All groups responding use discussion method at least in part. The *Boston "Study-Action" Group*, the *Cardijn Center* (YCW), the *Young Christian Students* (YCS) and the *Chicago Service Committees* and the *Christian Family Movement* make use of this technique entirely. Their sole deviation from such a method would be for some special event such as a study night.

St. Gabriel Guild for Social Action makes use of a *lecture* before discussion.

Secular Institutes use a large variety of approaches—all with the aim of inculcating evangelical perfection.

Friendship House uses discussion and lectures.

Social Action Content

All groups vary in the amount of dedication to the "Social Action Apostolate" as the term is herein understood.

The Service Committees (Boston and Chicago) devote their whole program to such an apostolate, e.g., economics, race question, etc.

The CFM, the YCW, and the YCS have programs which are largely concerned with Social Action, e.g., socio-economic problems, politics, race question, etc.

Content of Meetings

St. Gabriel Social Action Apostolate has a talk and discussion. All other groups use Gospel discussion and/or Liturgy discussions. Something akin to a Social Inquiry (observe, judge, act) is used by all groups except Secular Institutes.

Actions (A Sampling)

- 1) Ran Leadership Training Course.
- 2) Help people get jobs.
- 3) Interest others in joining and participating in profession and trade union groups.
- 4) Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.
- 5) Interested others in joining community groups—particularly those which were helping to solve race problem.
- 6) Send people to work in foreign lands (Secular Institutes).

Chaplain

In most meetings, the Chaplain makes comments after the meeting. He does not take part in the meeting proper. A few groups were addressed by the Chaplain at the beginning of the meeting. In these cases, the Chaplain served as resource man for a discussion to follow. In nearly all cases there was preparation of the meeting with a Chaplain.

Extraordinary Events

Retreats, Evenings or Days of Recollection, Study Days, yearly conventions—all these dedicated to the education and/or inspiration of the groups.

Obstacles to Progress of Groups

- 1) Difficulty in maintaining membership.
- 2) Difficulty in plotting out interesting program.
- 3) Smugness and satisfaction of members with status quo.

REVEREND WILLIAM QUINN
Catholic Action Federation
Chicago

Review of the Press

A STRENGTH-WEAKNESS PARADOX

Martin M. McLaughlin

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, U.S.A., edited by Louis J. Putz, C.S.C., Fides Publishers Association, Chicago 19, Illinois, 1956, 415 pp., \$5.95.

THE purpose of this remarkable and timely book is to illuminate the place of Catholicism in the American community, to wrest from obscurity the "relatively unknown part of Catholicism in the national life." In this effort the present volume is a conspicuous, if not total, success. The need for such an exposition was recognized by the editors as springing from an almost unprecedented set of circumstances due to the existence of the Church as "a free institution in a pluralistic society, a phenomenon quite recent in the long history of the Church." These circumstances make it "highly important that accurate information on the Church, in a fairly digestible form and presented by authors eminent for their knowledge in the field, be made available." (Louis J. Putz, C.S.C., *Preface*) Some selectivity has been exercised in order to present not an encyclopedia, but a rounded picture.

If it can be said that one basic factor emerges from this overview of American Catholicism — one characteristic, both historical and contemporary, which is at once the source of its strength and the core of its weakness — it is that the American Catholic Church is an immigrant church, a radically non-indigenous growth outside of, and in many ways counter to, the main stress of American historical development. This is the profoundly mixed blessing of the Church in America. As Bishop Wright puts it in his introduction, "This alien air which has surrounded Catholicism in so many American neighborhoods has resulted in many short-range disadvantages, but it should be a long-range source of strength to the Church in a nation which is, in its roots and idealism, itself entirely 'immigrant.'" From this basic attribute Bishop Wright extracts two corollaries — that the Church in America is "pro-

letarian," i.e., deeply rooted in and powerfully supported by the "working classes"; and "urban," predominantly the religion of city-dwellers.

From the early days of the Catholic handful in Revolutionary times through the vast immigrant influx of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the unpromising rationalist soil of the eighteenth century has produced, through the leavening of the immigration, a present-day American Catholicism somewhat paradoxical in nature, having, in the words of Father Gustave Weigel's introductory chapter, three distinguishing traits:

1. . . . it is not something traditionally inherent in the American way of life. . . . The American Catholic has explicitly chosen to be a Catholic. It was not thrust upon him by a culture.

2. . . . the American Catholic (is) more activist than contemplative. . . . The American has seen that logically perfect systems can be treacherous or even harmful, and he refuses to see the *summum bonum* in mere logical consistency. . . . Within a conservative framework, he is willing and ready to change all the time.

3. . . . American culture is highly respectful of religion and piety. . . . In the Constitution the people put religion beyond the state, not the state beyond religion.

Without too drastically wrenching the book into a logical structure, it can be said that the twenty-odd chapters between the statements quoted above and the challenging final essay by Father Walter J. Ong, on the Catholic intellectual frontier, are a verbalization of the implications of these traits. There are seven essays on general historical development and current structure — financial, educational, organizational; and fourteen chapters on specialized geographic (New England, Middle Atlantic, Rural Midwest, Deep South, Louisiana, Texas, Pacific Coast and Chicago) and functional aspects of the Church in the U.S.A. In the latter group are some of the most illuminating portions of the book:

1. In the chapter on labor, which contains a succinct and helpful account of the relations be-

tween the Church and organized labor in this country, Edward J. Marciniak also puts his finger on the key problem in that field:

The Church today is also the heir of a paradoxical development in U.S. history. On the one hand a long-standing friendship exists between the Church and the leaders of the American labor movement, while on the other hand the great bulk of Catholic union members know little or nothing of the Church's social doctrine.

2. In a clear and challenging chapter on race relations Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., reiterates his well-known uncompromising position on the moral and economic evils and the present situation of racial segregation:

In the largely industrialized modern world, segregation creates positive hardship for the group on which it is imposed: an economic as well as spiritual damage. . . . From its nature, it is an offense against the human person, a violation of his natural dignity and rights, *even when he gives to it, as an individual, his full consent . . . the whole question of segregation is the question of a dying cause*, a losing cause, a relic from earlier days. The tragedy, if there is such, is not so much in its existence as in the retardation or the lag of its disappearance.

For this alone *The Catholic Church, U.S.A.*, is worth reading.

3. Father John Tracy Ellis' now famous *Thought* article, "The American Catholic and the Intellectual Life," is reprinted as Chapter 20 of the present volume. As is already widely known, Father Ellis castigates the low level of Catholic scholarship in the U.S.A., which he sees based on a dual betrayal—of our own best intellectual tradition, scholasticism understood in its dynamic, not its sterile sense; and of each other, through irrational and prestige-seeking competition among graduate schools—in the following terms. There is the

. . . absence of a sense of dedication to an intellectual apostolate. . . . The chief blame . . . lies with the Catholics themselves. It lies in their frequently self-imposed ghetto mentality which prevents them from mingling as they should with their non-Catholic colleagues, and in their lack of industry and the habits of work. . . .

Father Ong's concluding chapter translates into the realm and terminology of the history of ideas the strength/weakness dialectic of the immigrant Church built on the historical foundation of eighteenth century rationalism and seventeenth-century Puritanism. Without obscuring the more strictly religious aspects of our present point in time he poses the challenge of the future in more or less intellectual terms. The Church in the U.S.A. came into being in

the legalistic atmosphere of rationalism. Because of this background

. . . the resulting religious sensibility, at least up to now, is symbolically and artistically impoverished and unproductive in its abstractness, but it is remarkably orthodox, for it is based on an approach to the Faith which is about as scientized and standardized as an approach to what transcends reason can well be.

We are stable, realistic, legalistic, formalistic, non-relativistic; but history has treated us ill . . .

For, however we may wish the facts to have been, it has fallen out that the post-romantic world, sensitized to patterns of development, and not the world of rationalism, devoted to fixity and stability, has been the world witnessing the progressive betterment of the condition of the working classes.

Much to our regret, the world is extremely complicated; the catechism does not answer all questions—it is an anchor but not a sail. We have to live not only in order, but with progress.

. . . the defensive mentality inherited from post-Reformation Catholicism and intensified in their predominantly Protestant surroundings has brought the Catholics of the United States, more than those elsewhere, to see these developments, and a great many others, as productive of nothing more than "difficulties" and hence as annoyances to be dealt with by being somehow demolished, rather than as exciting occasions for enriching their own understanding of the universe in the light of their faith. . . . It is certain that a mature understanding of this trend can never be arrived at until the American Catholic sensibility can transcend the impoverished frames of thought which can discern in post-Renaissance, or even in all post-medieval, developments nothing more than the progressive secularization and materialization of society. For only in certain ways is this age involved with the secular and material more than in other ages. On the one hand, the Church as a whole is freer of secular (in the sense of direct political) influence than she has ever been in her history, and on the other, this age is the age of victory over the tyranny of matter greater than the world has ever before known. . . .

As can be expected in a volume of this sort, containing the contributions of many different people, the writing is uneven and a central theme, other than that of the title, is difficult to trace with real continuity. The essays are sometimes brilliant and penetrating, but often pedestrian and contradictory. The historical chapters are summary, but valuable; some of the regional or local analyses are of secondary interest; and the chapter on education perhaps will appear the weakest to some—perhaps even anti-intellectual. But on the whole and considered as a single work it is excellent; it deserves to be widely read both here and abroad, and to be followed by more works with the depth that a compendium can hardly hope to reach.

Editorial

IT WAS our privilege these past few months to participate in three different types of Catholic Action get-togethers: the National Study Week of the *Young Christian Workers* at the University of Notre Dame, the *National Catholic Social Action Conference* in New Orleans, and the Tenth National Congress of the *Confraternity of Christian Doctrine* in Buffalo.

As these conferences multiply over the years, it becomes imperative that we keep firmly fixed in our minds the different kinds of tasks the Church has called the laity to perform in this twentieth century. Too often we become confused on the kinds of Catholic Action possible, to a point where it becomes difficult to distinguish the importance and value of each. Third Orders, Sodalities, the Legion of Mary, the CCD, the specialized movements of Catholic Action, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, Catholic Interracial Council — on and on the list grows. Do they overlap? How do they all fit together? How do we score them as to importance? Better still, in which should I be active?

Monsignor Gerard Philips, in *The Role of the Laity in the Church* (Chicago, Fides, 1956), makes some helpful distinctions between Catholic Action on the *religious level* (as a complementary adjunct to the work of the clergy) and Catholic Action in the *temporal order* (which is the precise domain and responsibility of the layman). The differences are immediately obvious.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is a letter-perfect example of the former, as it calls upon lay people to help the clergy in their mission to teach the Gospel to all peoples. The CCD is essentially an instructional arm of the Church, and happily, the laity are very much involved in this apostolate of the catechism.

The apostolate of the catechism, however, in no way takes away from (or overlaps) the mission of the Young Christian Workers, for example, which best typifies specialized Catholic Action movements — a leadership training effort for young people that they might fulfill their vocation as laymen in the economic and social order.

And again, the Young Christian Workers are not to be confused with social action organizations, strictly so-called, such as the Catholic Council on Working Life, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, the Catholic Interracial Council, which take direct action on social and economic issues.

Clearly, the layman has a vocation as a Christian to participate in political life, in trade

unions, in local community associations, in professional associations; in short, in all those areas of the temporal order where by virtue of his lay state he is found. Monsignor Peter Pavan, addressing the Congress of the Lay Apostolate in Manila last December, called this "an effort directed towards the penetration with Christian principles of institutions, milieux, professions."

This type of vocational fulfillment within the temporal order is not what we mean by Catholic Action. Monsignor Pavan says that all forms of Catholic Action have two elements in common — two elements which may be considered essential: if either one is lacking, we have no Catholic Action. "They are, (1) the mandate of the hierarchy; (2) action which is 'ecclesial' in character." He continues:

The "ecclesial" object of their action specifies and delimits the sphere within which C.A. associations exercise their particular apostolate: it is an essentially religious sphere, relating to the diffusion of Revealed Truth and of Moral Principles; to integral Christian formation; to conscious and active participation in liturgical life; to the exercise of charitable works; that is, the apostolate proper to Catholic Action associations is essentially formative in character: it aims to give its own members a complete Catholic education: dogmatic, moral, liturgical; for family, professional, social and political life.

So it is not uncommon to find flourishing Catholic Action associations as well as lay people engaged in action of Christian penetration of the temporal order. What, then, is the relationship between Catholic Action associations and those engaged in the temporal order? In answering this question, we believe that Monsignor Pavan comes to grips with the central question raised in many of our apostolic conferences. He writes:

In order effectively to exercise an apostolate of inspiration, the laity must have received an integral formation. . . . Today, as a general rule, Catholic Action associations, even when they are specialized, confine themselves to giving their own members an integral Christian formation. When these same members exercise their specific activities in the various fields of temporal life, they are, therefore, acting on their own initiative and responsibility, without involving the responsibility of their respective C.A. associations. The young worker, for example, receives in the Y.C.W. an integral Christian formation; but when he engages in his own specific economic activity in the field of labor, or in action in trade unions, whether neutral or of Christian inspiration, he is acting on his own responsibility, and without involving the responsibility of the Y.C.W.

We raise these questions for discussion in this issue of APOSTOLIC PERSPECTIVES which has as its theme the question of social action and leadership formation. It is our conviction that we won't get seriously at work in the arena of the temporal order until we have given a large number of men and women this integral Christian formation. We dare not run the risk of sending babes into the woods.

VINCENT J. GIESE